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WAR WITHOUT VIOLENCE

War without Violence

A STUDY OF GANDHI'S METHOD
AND ITS ACCOMPLISHMENTS

by Krishnalal Shridharani



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To

WINIFRED HARTZELL PATTERSON

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INTRODUCTION

WE VOCIFERANTS OF the twentieth century are continually crying that we want peace, but what most of us really mean is that we want no war. We think that we are groping toward tranquillity on earth, but actually we are hoping for the absence of war. Our cataclysmic experience of the World War has brought us to our knees. We have come to realize, after a long and painful process, that no utility can come out of the glowing furnaces of war which is not a pitiable thing beside the stark infernality of war's ravages. Naturally, therefore, most of us shudder at anything approaching war, and are quick to join the hue and cry for peace. So what happens?—Our abhorrence of war is crossed with our love for peace, and the real issue is obscured. We forget to distinguish between peace on one hand and a warless condition on the other—a fuzziness of thinking which has hindered our entire anti-war programme. Out of our confusion arises a defective plan of attack; we muster our forces on the wrong front. Instead of working against war, in most cases we work in vain for peace.

We mistake our target and engage in a sort of complicated shadow-boxing. Instead of assailing war, we concentrate our attack on social and political conflict. Conflict, competition, strife and struggle, however, are not the "enemy" we are after. In fact, it is unrealistic to assume that they can long be kept at bay when we consider the ever-changing equilibrium of our social order. Differences of ideas, ideals and interests are bound to cause friction—something which cannot be helped. It is war we are against; for as a means of settling our inevitable sporadic disputes, the institution of war has failed to

fulfill its function. Also it has been vividly brought to the world's attention lately that instead of soothing over our difficulties, war actually aggravates them. And it entails too high a price.

It is out of this confusion between social conflict on the one hand and its would-be mediator, war, on the other that pacifism, non-resistance, passive-resistance, "conscientious" opposition, and the like are born. "Peace at any price" becomes as honoured a motto, perhaps in subconscious form, as one of the Ten Commandments. With their unwavering logic, the pacifists argue that it takes two to make a quarrel, and then they go on to assure us that the simplest expedient to avoid war is by refusing to be the second party to a dispute. This line of action, or rather inaction, however, subordinates all other values, subjective though they may be, to the cardinal virtue of peace. Thus a war-torn people is easily led in an exclusive pursuit of a relative value, namely, peace.

So "strong-arm" methods have their day. The pacifists, the non-resisters, the conscientious objectors, make room, as it were, for the tyrannous and the unscrupulous. But there comes a time when even the idealists feel that "enough is enough," and that there are higher and dearer values than peace. In other words, the powers that be have bullied us too long.

What do we (the suppositional victims of hypothetical powers) do? We want to fight at every step and on all fronts, yet we will not resort to war because we regard it as internecine waste. We cast about for a new plan of concerted action, a new social institution which would solve our disputes, redress our wrongs, and thus replace war. We feel the need for an equivalent of war which is not so bloody in its sorties, so wild in its aim, and so barren in its results. We want a substitute for war which might even enable us to stop an invading army were we strong enough. In short, we want a new

form of war which can be waged without inflicting violence in retaliation.

As happens more often than not, the institutional machinery of national law and international conventions breaks down under the pressure of a crisis which springs from the very disruption of social bonds—that is, when no common values remain for both the opponents by which they may overcome the issue that inspires differences. Such differences in interests among men are, no doubt, a sign of health and vigour. For each human being is a unique combination of desires and capacities. Each seeks to find himself and to project his contribution into the general stream of living. Thoughtful people are well aware of the need of society for constant revitalization through these diversified thrusts from richly varied personalities. But at any given moment in time—and particularly in the troubled contemporary world of heightened conflicts among nations and groups—the need is for effective action. And effective action requires solidarity. The pressure appears, therefore, for a united front, which means conformity. Pressure for conformity operates in many important cases actually to emphasize and widen differences and even to encourage conflict. Our contemporary world is accordingly one of rival blocs arrayed against each other. Society tends to lose the advantages of differentiation in “fight situations.” So far has this gone that the greatest danger at the moment is that the hard-won gains of civilization may be lost under the feet of an international conflict. Clearly the problem is not one of minimizing differences and enforcing conformity, either within a single nation or internationally. And yet this is precisely what the alert liberal faces in our present world. We are by way of losing the advantage of intelligent differences in the necessitous clamour, at the last moment before action, for unity. And it is also at this juncture that the “anguished awareness” of the liberal rears its ugly head and leaves

him but two alternatives: either of being a passive if disgruntled witness to an undesirable state of affairs, or of going to the camp of the militarist where the remedy is worse than the malady.

The peace movement, in all its various manifestations, fails to offer an answer at this point, but rather leaves the liberals the world over in a dilemma. And it is also in connection with this contretemps that a war-jaded world, but a world eager and ready to protect and preserve its values, can profitably turn toward Gandhi and India.

For in India is being fought, as we shall see, a battle without the force of arms. There the people have refused to submit to what seems to them to be an unjust order, and at the same time, they have not resorted to violence to overthrow it. Instead they have employed a novel strategy which, as we shall observe, compels without being violent. What intrigues us more is the fact that, in India, the people are not stopping with mere good will, as the pacifists usually do, but, on the contrary, are engaged in direct action of a non-violent variety which they are confident will either mend or end the powers that be. Our eyes turn to India where huge political, economic, social, religious, and racial disputes are being settled without large-scale destruction of life and property, if not without sacrifice; where controversies bearing upon the lives of millions are being adjusted without carnage and wholesale massacre, if not without suffering; where a nation is out to destroy an alien authority without violence, if not without a struggle. The most significant and reassuring angle of the Indian situation lies in the fact that complete non-violence on one side seems to have reduced the violence and destruction on the part of the opponent to the barest minimum.

Herein lies the emergence of a new social institution, a novel mode of solving group and national conflicts. It is this instrument for attaining group objectives without

the aid of Machiavellian physical force and fraud—the emerging institution of Satyagraha—that we propose to study in the following pages. The timeliness of such an investigation can hardly be overemphasized in these days of imminent war. From the viewpoint of Western readers, the interest of this book lies in the fact that here at last comes a contribution from India whose appeal is not based on the traditional “mysticism of the Orient” but on a very matter-of-fact pragmatism. The whole focus is upon securing effective action, short of the destructive practice of war, for achieving realistic and needed ends.

The Indian question is a complex of three more or less distinguishable layers. In the first place, there is the political tangle, a maze of claims and counter-claims. One has to analyze its historic-economic background before even posing the question. Furthermore, it is a field wherein one is easily led to take sides, and, in truth, a side must be taken before the battle is over. Then, in the second place, there is the great social movement with national independence as its objective. This phase has its own peculiar problems of leadership, organization, and discipline, and involves, furthermore, a host of associational forms. Finally, there is the emergence of a new institution—an accepted mode of doing things as MacIver defines the concept—in the form of Gandhi's Satyagraha.

The bulk of my chapters are primarily concerned with the third aspect of the Indian situation, and our attention, therefore, is focused on an exposition and analysis of Satyagraha, or *Non-violent Direct Action*, as we have decided to call it. We are also interested in the Indian movement with its myriad associational forms (Ch. V); for it is from its pipe-line to the masses that the institution of Satyagraha derives its vitality. Any pages dealing with the first-mentioned aspect of the Indian question,

i.e., the political tangle (in Chs. IV, VII) are incidental and secondary, and it is only as background material that they are included here. The political controversy—the claims and counter-claims of contending parties in India and in the British Empire—is neither essential to the thesis put forward here nor to the writer's judgment of Satyagraha as a technique of concerted social action. For us, it is enough to assume that a conflict exists in India and that one party to the quarrel has been employing Satyagraha to achieve its ends. Thus the writer has small opportunity to fall into the snares of partisanship and interestedness.

An institution is to be judged in its functional efficiencies and deficiencies. The value of Satyagraha, if any, is to be gathered from its aims and achievements. Analytical narration of the various Satyagrahic operations (Chs. II, III, IV), therefore, is as essential to the story as are theoretical formulations and generalizations (Ch. I). In fact, the latter are to be based on the former; that is the only empirical way. In the pages that follow, therefore, either of two procedures might be employed: one might describe the actual application of non-violent direct action in specific cases in India, and derive therefrom bit by bit the general processes it involves; the other would reverse this order. In view of the fact that Satyagraha is novel to American and European readers, and various biographies of Gandhi tend to lose the hard-bitten realism of the process under the appraisal of the uniqueness of the man, the second of these procedures will here be followed. Since it is difficult to understand *what is done* without holding clearly in mind *how it is done*—especially in the case of such a novel technique as Satyagraha—the description of actual happenings in India (Part II) follows the exposition of the general processes of non-violent direct action (Part I).

Furthermore, Satyagraha has to be compared to and contrasted with war (Ch. X), since the former aspires,

as it were, to be an effective substitute for the latter. In other words, war furnishes us with a yardstick to measure and appraise Satyagraha. The utility, effectiveness and limitations of Satyagraha are to be judged in the light of the utility, effectiveness and limitations of war. And perhaps to the surprise of my Western readers, Satyagraha seems to have more in common with war than with Western pacifism (Ch. IX). Needless to say, there are revolutionizing differences as well.

A word about the method of investigation and sources of material: my principal source of information is naturally Gandhi, his writings, his utterances, his actions, and his significant silences. The originator of Satyagraha's ideology is also the greatest general in the field of "non-violent direct action" and the accepted leader of a social movement (Ch. VIII). His explicit and implicit policies, therefore, will illuminate a large proportion of the pages of this study. However, a movement always spreads far beyond its matrix, and is greater than any one individual, even its originator. The reader should be prepared, therefore, for two appraisals of Satyagraha—Gandhi's Satyagraha and Satyagraha in the light of recent events in India. Anyone at all versed in Indian affairs knows that the two have conflicted more than once, and that Gandhi would not uphold everything the present writer has to say.

Gandhi and his Indian movement have been the subjects of scores of books and treatises written by scholars of many lands, including, of course, India. These cannot be disregarded even if the researcher has a more intimate source of information. An exhaustive reading of these books has enabled the writer to reinforce many of his deductions, and sometimes quotations from them have been preferred to personal experience for the sake of the dissertation's objectivity. More important and helpful still has been a systematic scrutiny of newspapers,

magazines and manifestoes in Hindustani, Gujarati, Bengali and English. It is from these that the processes of a movement-in-action are deciphered. The author has interlarded this library research with material chosen from his conversation and correspondence with Indian leaders who are actually at work.

The main structure of my thesis, however, is founded on my own experience. In the pages that follow are woven the analysis and the rationale of my own actions and reactions, attitudes and thoughts pertaining to Satyagraha during the last decade. My life history lies at the bottom of this study. In the years from 1929 to 1933 my footsteps fell directly behind the great leader of the movement along with the other Satyagrahi volunteers who followed him with passionate devotion straight into newspaper headlines. No one ever had a better opportunity to observe at close range the innermost souls of Satyagraha's disciples. We held long, fervent discussions, and on the subject of our struggle, we advanced our most candid opinions. Beside my own life history, therefore, are aligned the stories of scores of fellow Satyagrahis to buttress my observations.

More beneficial, perhaps, from the point of view of detachment and impartiality have been my contacts with members of the opposing party. It was not unusual for me to share the environs of the policeman and the magistrate, the English sergeant and the native tax collector, the prison warder and the spy. It was from this source especially that I gradually became aware of the power of non-violence, Satyagraha's neutralizing and paralyzing counteraction against the coercive agencies of the powers that be.

My opportunity for close observation of "law and order," however, came in fairly recent years. In order to marshal my facts in some order, it is necessary to go back to the year that I was nine and heard the name of Gandhi for the first time. My mother was on a pilgrimage

that year—the fateful winter of 1920. I remember that at home we were all strained and irritable because more than a week had passed and there had been no word from her. We children were told that communication to the west was cut off because some “lawbreaker” had blasted the railway bridge near Viramgam, and severed the telegraph wires. It was then that I noticed the word “Gandhi” escaping again and again in the nervous conversation of my elders. In some way, he was connected with this “trouble.” My first pre-adolescent reactions to the Indian leader, consequently, were those of alarm and dislike. But, to make a long story short, my mother came home with new ideas and a whim, which, when I think of it now, was sheer inspiration. She kuddled me off to a progressive high school whose curriculum came under Gandhi’s “national education programme.” There I thrived for seven years, reading nationalist literature and gritting my teeth with the resolve that “something must be done.”

Upon matriculation, I joined Gandhi’s national university at Ahmedabad. This, along with the *Ashrama* near by, was the birthplace of many a Satyagrahic *coup* and the headquarters of Satyagraha’s chieftains. When I was what American collegians call a sophomore, Gandhi gave his signal for the 1930 Civil Disobedience Campaign, and without so much as a by-your-leave from home, I marched to the sea with Gandhi and the “first batch” to break the Salt Law. Realizing that millions of men and women were depending on our leader, we strained to do his bidding like greyhounds on a leash. All along the line of march, we were sent to nearby villages to address farmer-labour gatherings, and to mobilize them for an attack on the government’s salt monopoly.

The diary which I kept of our march to the sea is, as I look at it now, as graphic as any cinema epic. All those stirring months are colourfully mirrored there, and no

piece of library research has spurred on this thesis as much as that self-wrought picture of Satyagrahic columns moving slowly toward the sea.

The diary has no entry on May 5, 1930, but this day is etched across the retina of my eyes for all eternity; Gandhi was arrested amidst unforgettably dramatic scenes. Needless to say, Gandhi's capture was quickly followed by our own, and the next fortnight found me standing before a court of justice in Jalalpur. I pleaded guilty of deliberately breaking the Salt Law and annoyed the judge by asking him to "Give me all you can, because if you don't, I'll be here again and for the same reason. . . ."

As one of His Majesty's numerous prisoners for the next three months, I cooled my heels in a comfortable cell, and prepared to occupy myself with my own turbulent thoughts. But down the corridor, I soon located my friends, my teachers, and some of our leaders. During hours of laxity, we found it possible to walk and talk together, coming inevitably to the topic which consumed us all—India's problems and Satyagraha's possibilities. Thus the calm of cell life, broken as it was by these monsoonal interludes of argument and oratory, furnished me with a revised and revitalized estimate of Satyagraha.

Soon after my release from prison, the Gandhi-Irwin pact was signed, a period of truce was indicated, and we seasoned recruits returned reluctantly to our former ranks in life. As for me, I joined Poet Rabindranath Tagore's international university near Calcutta, to wait for graduation and then embarkation westward in 1934.

During my past five years in the United States, I have developed this thesis at a safe distance, mentally as well as physically, from the Indian struggle, and I have tried, as it were, to observe Satyagraha through the Westerner's eyes. Detailed discussions with sociologists and political scientists, as well as with leaders of

the peace movement in the United States, have modified some of my old conclusions. Scores of college groups, religious bodies, dilettante clubs and peace organizations have faced me as I addressed them on my speciality, and I have always carefully observed the reactions of these audiences, which, in a majority of cases, have been heartening. My contact with the Western world has led me to think that, contrary to popular belief, Satyagraha, once consciously and deliberately adopted, has more fertile fields in which to grow and flourish in the West than in the Orient. Like war, Satyagraha demands public spirit, self-sacrifice, organization, endurance and discipline for its successful operation, and I have found these qualities displayed in Western communities more than in my own. Perhaps the best craftsmen in the art of violence may still be the most effective wielders of non-violent direct action. It is but a question, in the words of William James, of "opinion-making men seizing historic opportunities."

And the manifest impotency of Western pacifism points to Satyagraha as a surer way to peace, if peace is to be defined as the sum total of averted wars.

KRISHNALAL SHRIDHARANI

New York City

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Part I

THE TECHNIQUE OF SATYAGRAHA

CHAPTER I

HOW IS IT DONE?

WHAT IS SATYAGRAHA? The author has addressed this question to scores of Indian villagers—men and women who have actually transformed the ideology into a flesh-and-blood mass movement. The answer was always the same: “Satyagraha,” they say, “is Gandhi’s way of fighting the British *Raj*.”

They ought to know. Some of them have watched their property being confiscated as a penalty for their active support to the movement. Others have spent the best years of their lives in jails and “detention camps” after getting too closely identified with certain of Satyagraha’s numerous activities. Villagers have been killed in the struggle, and millions more are ready to die.

To these unassuming and for the most part illiterate people, Satyagraha has been Gandhi’s war with the government. They are a simple folk, so they think in terms of their own concrete and immediate experience. To their more sophisticated cousins in Bombay, Calcutta, and Madras, Satyagraha spells a new type of war of which Gandhi is the fountainhead. A further abstraction of the idea leads us to the doctrinaire’s view of Satyagraha as a technique for solving conflict, and Gandhi’s ideology becomes a form of struggle to achieve social ends.

(Literally translated, the word “Satyagraha” means insistence on truth. The content of the word, however, includes an elaborate programme. The concept has come

to be applied to all the organized and concerted activities—co-ordinated in the following pattern of a successful Satyagraha—of the nationalists in India who are pledged to Gandhi's doctrine of non-violence. In most cases, these mass actions have been extra-legal and extra-constitutional; they have outgrown parliamentary procedure and become revolutionary. Thus Satyagraha becomes a form of direct action in so far as the people take the law in their own hands. In contrast to war or violent revolution, however, Satyagraha is *non-violent direct action*.

Satyagraha, as an organized mass action, presupposes that the community concerned has a grievance which practically every member of that community feels. This grievance should be of such large proportions that it could be transformed, in its positive side, into a "Cause" rightfully claiming sacrifice and suffering from the community on its behalf. Given this condition, Satyagraha suggests itself. "The beauty of this method," Gandhi states, "is that it comes up to oneself; one has not to go out in search for it."

Seeking a type or a pattern of Satyagraha, launched and operated on the behalf of a "Cause," is the object of this chapter. The stages and forms of non-violent direct action that weave this pattern of Satyagraha are derived and abstracted from happenings in India. It is the author's own systematization based on the realities of Gandhi's movement in India. Gandhi, consequently, is in no way responsible for whatever defects this systematization may involve. Moreover, there is no way of comparing this structure with other similar works in the field, as the following, to the author's knowledge, is the first attempt at evolving a pattern of Satyagraha.)

I. NEGOTIATIONS AND ARBITRATION

No avenue leading toward the peaceful settlement of a given conflict should be left unexplored before embarking

upon a programme of Satyagraha, that is, non-violent direct action. Direct action, in order to be non-violent, should at the very start create an atmosphere of understanding. The preliminary action, therefore, should be limited to such activities as would not precipitate a crisis. Consequently the exercise of constitutional rights takes precedence in a programme of Satyagraha. "Those only can take up Civil Disobedience," Gandhi says, "who believe in willing obedience even to irksome laws imposed by the state so long as they do not hurt their conscience or religion, and are prepared equally willingly to suffer the penalty of Civil Disobedience."

The search for a peaceful solution as the indispensable first step in the strategy of Satyagraha has a twofold significance. In the first place, it emphasizes the fact that, though unfortunately disrupted for the time being, the disputants have a fundamental unity. It also emphasizes that the unemotional attitude of give-and-take is the ideal condition for arriving at a settlement. In case this ideal condition is not obtainable at the critical moment, the Satyagrahis hope to create it as a result of their non-violent direct action.

The prerequisite of an honest quest for a peaceful settlement before engaging in any of the Satyagraha activities clarifies, in the second place, the spirit of the programme. It brings forth in bold relief the reluctance the Satyagrahis show toward starting direct action. The opponent is given to understand that the Satyagrahis look upon direct action only as the final weapon. They would not use it unless there was no other course open to them. Their attitude seems to say: we welcome a peaceful settlement now, and we will welcome it at any stage of the movement. This position gives them an *aura* of morality in the eyes of the opponent. It also makes it clear that they are not just "irresponsible law-breakers" but persons fighting for what to them seems to be the truth. Making the right first impression is half the battle

in Satyagraha which aims at "the winning over of the opponent by suffering, i.e., love."

The first stage of Satyagraha includes various items. Over and above utilizing such legislative channels as are open to them, the Satyagrahis may enter into direct negotiations with the responsible party on the opposite side. Sending a deputation composed of influential and notable citizens to the proper authorities is another manoeuvre. Failing in either action, the Satyagrahis may seek arbitration by a third party acceptable to both the disputants. When even arbitration fails to satisfy the demands of the Satyagrahis, the time is ripe for them to take the second step in the programme of non-violent direct action.

2. AGITATION

Unable to get redress from the powers that be, the Satyagrahis launch their activities in the opposite direction. They go to the people. They start, as the second step in the programme of non-violent direct action, a campaign of agitation among the people more directly affected by the dispute. Generating "cause-consciousness" becomes the supreme aim of Satyagraha leaders at this stage of the movement.

Issuing pamphlets which give a clear picture of all the implications of the "Cause," circulating books and papers on the same theme are some of the numerous activities of the agitators. Catchy songs and slogans upholding the "Cause," personal contacts, speeches, group meetings, debates and discussions also form a vital part of the propaganda activity. The use of modern means of communication such as the radio and the cinema is also included as an integral part of the machine of mass propaganda.

For one thing, the agitation keeps the issue alive. The opponent can no longer consider it a thing of the past and assume an attitude of complacency. In case there

is even an infinitesimal conflict in anti-Satyagraha ranks with regard to what stand their body should take, that conflict is now increasingly aggravated by the constant activity of the Satyagrahis. And at this stage of non-violent direct action, as well as at many other stages, the Satyagrahic assignment is to disrupt the balance of personal and group loyalties in the opponent by psychological suggestions.

Gandhi and other pioneer leaders of the National Congress party have had to utilize all these instruments in order to create, on one hand, what we call, for want of a better name, "cause-consciousness" and a contagious spreading of the ideology of *Swaraj* (self-government), and turning from that, to expose the moral defences of the ruling group. In addition to these techniques, Gandhi has time and again undertaken all-India tours from Bombay to Burma and from Kashmir to Cape Comorin. He has taken special pains to cover as many out-of-the-way villages as possible in order to enthuse the illiterate and unorganized peasantry. The all-India Congress party, under the inspiration of Gandhi, has posted a "village-worker" in practically every town and village of India. Until 1931 Gandhi was the editor-publisher of two now defunct weeklies: *Young India* in English, and *Navajivana* in Gujarati. Lately he has been editing *Harijan* ("Man of God," Gandhi's name for the untouchable). His policy is to make his publications as inexpensive as possible so that even the poor can afford them.

In democratic countries, this stage of non-violent direct action is not likely to meet with serious obstacles. The agitators, nevertheless, have to be prepared to reckon with indirect pressure. For no government, however democratic, is likely to view with passive resignation a propaganda against itself. In totalitarian countries and in colonies, such as India, the battle begins at this early stage.

However, the Satyagrahis hope even at this stage that their agitation among the people concerned, and the normally widespread interest in the issue among sympathetic neutrals, may influence the decision of the opponent. But when they find no confirmation of their hope, they go ahead with their third step in the programme of non-violent direct action.

3. DEMONSTRATIONS AND THE ULTIMATUM

"Cause-consciousness" now seeks expression. A vague sense of solidarity, the result of vigorous agitation, now tends to become organized. Public meetings grow larger and larger, and there is a buzz of discussion in the bazaar and in the market place. Schools and colleges, though under the control of the government, become undercover centres of Satyagrahic thinking and planning. The more pervasive the cause, the more extensively felt is its consciousness.

When the Satyagrahis try to organize these loose ends of solidarity, when they try to divert them into manifest channels, the movement enters its third stage. Various kinds of demonstrations are next on the programme. There is a procession of sixty people one day, of six thousand the next. Public meetings clear the way for mass meetings, and they take place more frequently. Resolutions are passed codifying the determination of the people to fight to the finish. And then *Hartals* (complete cessation of all activities as a sign of mourning) are called.

Satyagraha at this point is colourful, and "colour" leads to good publicity. Thereupon this publicity draws in more people. Party songs and party slogans are directed toward individuals who have not as yet been swayed. Uniforms are paraded and the youth of the community finds a new outlet for its energies. In India, this period of non-violent direct action has been disproportionately

long, mainly for two reasons. In the first place, the great distances of India, coupled with an inadequate means of communication and transportation, are something of a drawback when it comes to the element of "social-contagion" so necessary to a successful *Swaraj* movement. In the second place, the populace of India has not exerted itself in massed direct action for the past hundred years—the last of such endeavours being the so-called Sepoy Mutiny. It is not surprising, therefore, that they lingered a little over the preliminaries and apparently enjoyed each moment.

In due time, however, the whole of India became a veritable ocean of snowy, handmade cloth—the simple and inexpensive uniform of the Gandhi movement. Congress party nuclei began to grow in village after village like mushrooms. There were more parades, and these in every corner of India. Resolutions embodying the determination of the people were hammered on plaster walls, and Gandhi's name was on every tongue. Even popular music was replaced by the songs of Gandhi and of Mother India.

Included in this stage of Satyagraha is the precipitous step of issuing an ultimatum. In this document, drawn up by The Leader with the consent of the party dignitaries, the needs of the people are listed without any exaggeration. A specific time limit is set for the government's fulfilment of these minimum demands. If the government does not change its position after the ultimatum, the people, confident that they can make government impossible, embark upon direct action. Thus the ultimatum amounts to a "conditional declaration of war."

Gandhi has delivered two such ultimatums to the British government. The first was delivered to Lord Reading, then Viceroy of India, in 1922, before starting the Non-co-operation Movement. The second was conveyed to Lord Irwin in 1930 as a prelude to the Civil Disobedience Movement. True to the spirit of non-violence, Gandhi

approached the authorities, according to his own words, on "bended knees" and implored them to "find a way out" before he had to resort to civil disobedience.

The people "lay their cards on the table" at this point in Satyagrahic development, and they fully expect their new move to have a sobering effect on the opponent. They aim to force the issue and to remind the government that the threatened direct action will be a grave matter.

If this decisive phase of Satyagraha also fails to bring about a just settlement, the populace is then called upon to plunge into the more militant programme of direct action.

4. SELF-PURIFICATION

The mobilized energy of the people as a direct result of the dynamic crusade for the "Cause" is now ready to be moulded into action. The failure of all constitutional and lawful attempts has left revolutionary activity as the only alternative. Moral suasion having proved ineffective the Satyagrahis do not hesitate to shift their technique to compulsive force.

The illegality of the use of force is obvious. At this point in the relentless advance toward direct action, democracies adopt measures similar to those of autocracies in stamping out the growing danger. From here on, direct action is regarded as revolutionary. Non-violent direct action, however, claims to be distinguished from revolutionary direct action. Although illegal, non-violent direct action is lent a certain overtone of justification and legitimacy by the introduction at this juncture of self-purification, the fourth phase of the Satyagrahic prospectus.

By taking upon themselves a part of the responsibility for "the wrong" they are fighting against, the Satyagrahis undertake a different line of attack from that of the revolutionists. Contending that the wrong might not have

materialized but for their own submission, the Satyagrahis begin to change their own behaviour and thought patterns. "The primary object," Gandhi writes, "is self-purification. Its direct result must be paralysis of a government which lives on our vices and wickednesses." For the tyrant has the power to inflict what we lack strength to resist.

Fasting and public prayers have been the two most universal self-purification phases of Satyagraha in India. In addition, the taking of vows of self-denial by individuals and by groups has also been an important aspect of the Indian movement. Many denied themselves intoxicating drinks and drugs, and thereby bored a hole in the government income. Others gave up luxurious articles imported from foreign ports. Quite a few resigned from lucrative government posts to come down to the level of India's peasant and proletarian. It is significant that most of the ranking leaders of the National Congress party, including Gandhi, were formerly extremely rich businessmen and practitioners. Moreover Gandhi's periodic fasts and his pledge "never to return home until India is free" are among the notable examples of the effective use of the instrument of "self-purification." Other countries are likely to evolve different forms of self-purification. when and if they engage in a Satyagraha. For the forms of self-purification are conditioned by the nature of the wrong as well as by the folkways and mores of the community.

Self-purification is advanced by its adherents as an instrument for convincing the opponent that the Satyagrahis intend to struggle to the finish, and that they are ready to make any sacrifice in order to achieve their ends. It is also expected to assure the opponent that the Satyagrahis harbour no motive of revenge but are, on the contrary, prepared to suffer willingly. Furthermore, voluntary suffering and self-denial attract the attention of the people at large. Wavering members of the Indian community can seldom withstand the urge to join the

movement made so appealing by its opportunity for sacrifice and martyrdom.

The Satyagrahis, by emphasizing the spirit of self-sacrifice and suffering, endeavour to raise the level of the issue. It ceases to be a matter of wrangling. The issue revolves around the bringing about of a just settlement of the dispute.

Some even see in this an attempt to embarrass the opponent.

The failure of this instrument of non-violent direct action clears the way for sanctions.

5. STRIKE AND GENERAL STRIKE

From this point on, it is hard to present a progressive, step-by-step development of Satyagraha. Many of the phases of Satyagraha that are to follow are not the direct outgrowth of one from the other, but are, on the contrary, distinct instruments to be utilized either simultaneously or separately. Special attention will be paid, nevertheless, to linking the separate units in consecutive order whenever it is possible.

The strike as such is labour's instrument for the acquisition of a desired standard of treatment and living from the employer. Its place, therefore, in a political movement directed toward either amending or toward ending the government is not so obvious. But a closer scrutiny of our complex economic life will uncover a few places where modern forms of government are extremely vulnerable to the weapon of the strike. Attacking these vantage points through the instrument of the strike, consequently, becomes a part of Satyagraha strategy.

For one thing, there is hardly any distinction between big industry and the government in modern capitalistic societies. Big industry, as an extreme form of vested interest, generally aligns itself with the government in the time of a political crisis. Weakening the vested interests,

therefore, amounts to weakening the political system under which they flourish.

Secondly, modern governments engage themselves in various activities relating to finance, industries and utilities. These occupations and interests of the government provide the Satyagrahis with an opportunity to utilize the instrument of the strike.

Strikes formed an important part of the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921. Their role in the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930 was also significant. The potentiality of the strike, however, is not fully explored by the Satyagrahis in India. This is perhaps the joint result of the peculiar nature of India's proletariat as well as of the course of the nationalist struggle. Of India's great population, 72.98 per cent is agricultural and depends on the soil for its livelihood. The overwhelming majority of these, although extremely poor, are peasants owning or leasing small plots of land. Only one-third can be counted as agricultural labourers and, consequently, can be classed as proletarians.

Accurate current figures of the number employed in agriculture or industry as workers are not available. The India Office figures for 1922, submitted to the League of Nations in a special report, are as follows:

Agricultural workers, excluding peasant proprietors	28,000,000
Industrial workers, including cottage industries, mines and transport	20,000,000
Lascars (maritime workers)	141,000

Out of the 20,000,000 industrial workers, only 1,361,002 were employed in India's 5,144 factories in 1922,¹ the most recent year for which statistics are available. Thus the section of workers most favourable for labour

¹ Based on figures quoted in the *Indian Year Book*: 1922, edited by Sir Stanley Reed, K.B.E., LL.D., Bombay, Calcutta and London, 1922.

organizations is extremely small. Therefore India nationalists naturally concentrate on the village farmers as their mainspring of support and neglect the city workers correspondingly. This, however, probably would not be the case in countries with a greater and better-organized proletariat.

India's labour movement has flowed mainly into these five channels:

1. The Trade Union Federation.
2. The Railwaymen's Federation.
3. The All-India Trade Union Congress.
4. The Communist Unions.
5. The Ahmedabad Labour Association.

All except the fifth-mentioned branches of the labour movement in India had for a long time kept aloof from the nationalist movement on the ground of ideological differences. The Ahmedabad Labour Association has a membership of about 30,000. It has perhaps the best-equipped staff and organization in all India. It owes its inspiration to Gandhi and consequently it has always participated in the nationalist struggle. Following the lead of the Ahmedabad organization, the rest of the branches of the Indian labour movement held a "Unity Conference" in 1930, when Satyagraha was in full swing, and adopted among other things the following in its platform:

"The Indian Trade Union Movement shall support and actively participate in the struggle for India's political freedom from the point of view of the working class."

Ever since that time, the two movements have drawn closer to each other. Lately, the activities of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the ex-president of the National Congress party, and Mr. M. N. Roy, the erstwhile executive of the Moscow Comintern, have greatly advanced the possibilities of a sort of *front populaire* being created behind

the nationalist struggle. Their purpose seems to be preparation for a general strike in the event of another Satyagraha movement.

So far, there has never been a general strike in India. One was proposed in 1930 in the event of Gandhi's arrest. But he ruled it out on the characteristic plea that it would be "too much ado about nothing."

6. PICKETING

Picketing is the natural consequence of a strike. It advertises the strike and it adds to its effectiveness. It is an appeal to the general public to withdraw its patronage from the shops and concerns picketed. In the programme of the Indian Satyagraha, however, a strike is not the only signal for picketing. The latter has been evident many times in India independent of any strike. In most cases, picketing as a phase of Satyagraha has followed the boycott.

In 1921, for example, the law courts were picketed by the Non-co-operators, and litigants were urged to go to *Panchayats* (Village-Five or Town-Five tribunals, revived by the Congress party). Government schools and colleges were also picketed, and the students were urged to go to national institutions. Shopkeepers who carried British-manufactured goods came to dread the word "picket." Most of the government houses were assiduously picketed by women whose particular ambition was to embarrass the government officials for failing to sacrifice their lucrative jobs in the cause of India's freedom. The 1930 movement repeated the entire performance with the addition of picketing in front of opium and liquor stores. Women clad in saffron *saris* (an Indian symbol corresponding to the Chinese suicide-squad) proved to be the most effective pickets. At every rally, stress was laid on the winning of new converts by oratory and arguments which should be gently presented.

The government retaliated with the jailing and general harassing of the pickets. Some could even show teeth marks made by the police. The oppression, instead of crushing the movement, acted against those who used it. Many policemen became disgusted with their duty of beating harmless people who never failed to do an act of kindness whenever it was possible. The public at large became enraged at the government action. As a result, picketing became more successful.

7. DHURNA

Dhurna, the father of all sit-down strikes,¹ is an ancient institution of India. Every so often in the Middle Ages a moneylender, failing to receive his money back in due time, would sit in front of the house of the debtor, refusing to budge from his place or to take any food until the client paid in full. Since the interesting situation always gathered a crowd of idle curious, the debtor would make a supreme effort to pay rather than suffer a long drawn-out siege with its attendant embarrassment. The *Bhat* (bard of the royal court) used a similar method when he wanted his king to "be a man" and fight. When his ruler, out of cowardice or other considerations, refused to meet an invading or offending king in combat, the *Bhat* would sit in the palace gate and start a hunger strike. In most cases, this compelled the king to fight.

In modern times, there have been sit-down strikes in the textile mills of the Punjab and in the jute mills of Bengal. In France, England, and especially in the United States, the weapon has proved highly effective. The success of the sit-down is due to the fact that no industry which sells its products directly to the public can afford

¹ Cf. "The origin of the sit-down strike is unknown. Some think that the Gandhi passive resistance movement in India may have stimulated the idea, but the method has been known for years in coal mines." Louis Stark, "Sit-downs" *Perfect a Strike Technique*, N. Y. *Times Magazine*, January 10, 1937.

to alienate public opinion. The general public is always opposed to violence and bloodshed in suppressing strikes, and unless these methods are utilized, it is almost impossible to break a sit-down strike. *Dhurna*, therefore, is the most dramatic way of influencing public opinion both when the effort is successful and when it is crushed.

Sitting *Dhurna* has assumed peculiar forms in India's Satyagraha operations. In 1922, the Non-co-operators sat down in the gates of Calcutta University and blocked the passage of their fellow students. The Satyagrahis implored the conforming students not to hesitate to step on their bodies if the latter felt justified in entering that way. They also assured the non-striking students that they would not raise a finger in retaliation and that they were prepared to bear the physical pain with smiling faces. Similar tactics were employed against those Indian government servants who continued to serve on administrative posts in defiance of the call for non-co-operation. There have been instances of people stretching themselves flat on the ground and inviting the official to tread on their bodies in order to go to his work. In quite a few cases, women are reported to have resorted to *Dhurna* against their own "loyal" husbands.

The city of Bombay engaged in a vigorous boycott of foreign cloth in 1930. Many of the dealers in foreign cloth gave in and signed the Congress pledge not to sell the boycotted goods. One big firm dealing in foreign cloth, however, proved unbending and defied the Satyagrahis for several months. It continued to supply truckloads of Manchester cloth to small shops outside the city limits. Urgent appeals by leaders and the entreaties of women pickets failed to move the dealer. As a final recourse, a young Satyagrahi laid himself in the driveway of the store one afternoon, and asked the lorryman to drive his truck over his body on the latter's errand of delivering foreign cloth. The truck-driver drove his lorry over the prostrate man. The Satyagrahi died instantaneously,

but the indignation of the whole Bombay Presidency, the writer can state on the basis of his personal knowledge, corroborated by his colleagues as well as by newspaper accounts, made the boycott a great success. The dealer in foreign cloth himself, according to newspaper reports, joined the movement.

A few days after the martyrdom of their comrade, a huge procession of Satyagrahis was stopped by armed police on one of Bombay's main streets. About 30,000 men, women and children sat down wherever they were on the street. Facing them sat the police. Hours passed but neither party would give in. Soon it was night and it began to rain. The onlooking citizens organized themselves into volunteer units to supply the Satyagrahis with food, water and blankets. The Satyagrahis, instead of keeping the supplies for themselves, passed them on to the obstructing policemen as a token of their good will. Finally the police gave in, and the procession culminated in a triumphant midnight march.

In spite of the numerous successes of the instrument of *Dhurna*, Gandhi has declared himself against the "barbaric" practice. Time and again he has exhorted his followers to "refrain from sitting *Dhurna*." The technique of sitting *Dhurna*, however, has proved to be a powerful way of moulding public opinion. The extreme form of both strike and picketing, *Dhurna* has goaded people still undecided to join in direct action. It has often precipitated upheavals in the usual loyalties of the populace at large. Recourse to *Dhurna* from time to time seems to signify that the movement in this respect has gone beyond the men who originated it.

8. ECONOMIC BOYCOTT

Boycott, as an organized programme of withdrawing, and of inducing others to withdraw, from business relations with the opponent, is too well-known a weapon in the

Western world to warrant a detailed analysis here. The boycotts that have taken place in India in the past thirty years have been of the international variety by which one nation refuses to buy the commodities of another. As such, they have been an effort on India's part to restrict the market of the opposing nation by putting into motion the consumer's power. By restricting or destroying the Indian market of Great Britain, primarily a mercantile country, the Satyagrahis have sought to destroy England's zeal for holding India.

A steady boycott of British goods has existed in India ever since the attempted "Partition of Bengal" some three generations ago. This boycott movement has been supplemented and greatly enhanced by *Swadeshi*, a programme of patronizing indigenous industries and of reviving cottage crafts. Gandhi's Spinning Wheel plan has been both the symbol and the backbone of *Swadeshi*.

However, it was the militant boycotts of 1921 and 1930, undertaken as an integral part of Satyagraha, which dealt the severest blows to British commercial interests. We will take the 1930 boycott, which is the most complete and the latest, as our sample. The total yearly exports of the United Kingdom to India since 1924 are:

Year	<i>Total Exports of the United Kingdom to British India in Millions of Pounds</i>
1924	90.6
1925	86.0
1926	81.8
1927	85.0
1928	83.9
1929	78.2
(boycott year) 1930	52.9

Cotton piece-goods being by far the greatest import of India from Great Britain, the figures relating to them

are more revealing. The total Indian import of cotton piece-goods from all countries has increased from 1,823,000,000 yards in 1924 to 1,936,000,000 yards in 1929, and 1,919,000,000 yards in 1930; but Great Britain's export of the same commodity to India has fallen from 1,250,000,000 yards to 1,076,000,000 yards in 1929, before the Satyagraha was started, and to 720,000,000 yards in 1930, when the boycott was in full swing. This indicates a decline of 14 per cent in the normal year of 1929, and of 42.4 per cent in the boycott year. There was an 84 per cent drop between October, 1930, and April, 1931, when the boycott was at its zenith.¹

The consequent unemployment in the Lancashire cotton industry was reported to have reached a 47.4 increase by December of 1930. That meant that of the 600,000 workers employed in Lancashire mills, half that number were rendered jobless. As a result, deputations of the Lancashire mill-owners and mill-workers petitioned the Secretary of State for India, urging him to "do something about India."

When Gandhi was contemplating a tour of Lancashire in 1931, the London authorities tried to dissuade him because of possible danger to his life. Nevertheless, Gandhi, the indirect cause of the ruin of Lancashire, visited the district and received one of the greatest receptions of his life. He attributed the cordial reaction to his movement's spirit of non-violence.

9. NON-PAYMENT OF TAXES

The call for non-payment of taxes ushers in non-violent direct action in its purely illegal, unlawful and seditious stage. By refusing to fill the coffers of the state, the Satyagrahis attempt to cut the very life-line of the government. America's "no taxation without repre-

¹ Based on the *Statistical Abstract for the United Kingdom*, 74th number, and *Trade and Navigation, the United Kingdom*.

sentation" campaign during the Revolutionary War falls within this category. Various have been the uses of the weapon in India. Sometimes it has been resorted to on a small regional basis, on other occasions as a large provincial measure, and then again it has been wielded by the entire nation. In comparatively few cases, the city people have used it by refusing to pay their income and other taxes. In the majority of cases, however, non-payment of taxes has been resorted to by Indian farmers, mostly village-dwellers, who have refused to pay the land revenue. In the last-mentioned form, "no-tax" campaigns have occurred all over India quite frequently during the past twenty years. A detailed description of its operations has been scheduled for a later chapter. Here, however, we are concerned with it in so far as it exemplifies a form of Satyagraha.

When a "no-tax" is attempted, the reactions of the state can easily be imagined. It strikes back at the Satyagrahis with arrest, confiscation of land plots and leases, confiscation of property, bank accounts and of cattle; beatings; terrorizing, and finally by the command to shoot at sight whenever there is "mutiny."

To these forms of oppression, a Satyagrahi is pledged to turn a smiling face. He is honour-bound to receive these penalties willingly and without rancour; he is to suffer in silence. The suffering of the Satyagrahi enthralls other members of the community to follow his example. Officials start to resign when the general public begins to show sympathetic leanings toward the side of the victims. Finally it becomes impossible for the opponent to muster up enough men to continue "the reign of terror." He is then compelled to import "scabs," hirelings from outside, a process which further alienates the general public. The newcomers in turn become disgusted with their job of torturing people who do not mean any harm to them but who, on the contrary, often reciprocate with a gracious act right on top of the worst kind of treatment.

In the end, non-resistance breaks the momentum of the opposition. There is no immediate incentive for oppressive action; so it comes to a standstill.

It may well be argued here that the efficacy of non-violence on individuals cannot prove its influence on groups. A group as such never comes within the loving embrace of the non-violent resister or resisters. It has no personality and, therefore, it is not subject to experience. However, there is no getting around the fact that though the group has no personality, it always has a personnel. Without the individuals there would be no group, and individuals, from necessity, come in direct contact with Satyagrahis. Thus a group or a system, through its personnel, becomes subject to Satyagrahic influence. Conversion of individual members shatters the solidarity of the group. As evidence it might be mentioned that the non-violent spirit of Gandhi's movement has won many friends from British ranks, both at home and in India, and consequently the die-hards and the vested interests cannot present an entirely confident and solid front.

There is still another avenue through which Satyagraha works. The spirit of non-violence never fails to gain the sympathy of the general public which, most of the time, is opposed to violence and bloodshed. It becomes in this way a powerful instrument for influencing world opinion, a factor in public affairs which cannot be ignored since the growth of rapid transportation and communication. The Western world more than India has experienced this fact. We have in mind the numerous sit-downs that have occurred in Europe and in the United States. It has been a common experience that even when a situation demanded it, the employers as well as the governments have hesitated to use violence in the face of public opinion.

9A. HIZRAT

A spontaneous though peculiar offshoot of India's numerous no-tax campaigns has been the practice of *Hizrat*. The word *Hizrat* is of Arabic origin, and it was used in its original form of *Hejira*, in connection with Mohammed's flight from Mecca to Medina. Instead of submitting to the tyranny of Mecca, the Prophet preferred emigration. Still further back in history, the instrument of emigrating from the oppressive region was utilized by the plebs in order to secure reforms from the ruling Patricians of the Roman Republic. Mass emigration as a protest against oppression has been resorted to frequently in modern Europe. The very foundation of the American colonies was the result of the Puritan Fathers' mass emigration from England.

The farmers of the districts of Bardoli and Kheda in the Bombay Presidency perfected the technique of mass emigration during their no-tax campaigns of 1919, 1929, and 1930. When the government's oppression became unbearable, they emigrated *en masse* to adjoining territories of the State of Baroda, a native state over which the British government has no direct jurisdiction.

The employment of *Hizrat* is conditioned by the composition of the region where a Satyagraha takes place and of its surroundings. It is less practical in areas which are at a great distance from territories with a different sovereignty. But wherever and whenever possible, *Hizrat* is not merely an escape from hardships, but it is also an effective way of neutralizing the power of the opponent. For it becomes impossible to govern when there is none to be governed. In most cases, consequently, the populace is called back on its own terms.

10. NON-CO-OPERATION

"Even the most despotic government," Gandhi says, "cannot stand except for the consent of the governed

which consent is often forcibly procured by the despot. Immediately the subject ceases to fear the despotic force, his power is gone." Any political power, likewise, is paralyzed as soon as its source of supply, viz., the support of the community, is cut off. In the final analysis, co-operation of the people at large is the only reality for political authority. The French philosopher, Rousseau, recognized this fact when he laid down his conception of the "general will" as the indispensable condition for the existence of the state.

It then follows that the withdrawal of public support must mean an end of a political system. The community, as distinguished from the state, can render the latter powerless by not co-operating with it. Thus the tenth stratagem of Satyagraha, viz., non-co-operation, constitutes a potent weapon in the hands of the people in order to end an oppressive rule.

The weapon of non-co-operation has been wielded continuously by a small but powerful minority ever since Mr. Gandhi's advent on India's political scene. It has attained threatening proportions, however, only during times when the public at large has also participated in the programme. The instances of the 1919-1921 and 1930-1932 movements are the most notable in this respect.

The programme covering the first period included:

(1) Surrender of all titles of honour and the voluntary giving up of all honorary offices. This action would, on one hand, shatter the prestige of the opponent government and, on the other, make the business of administration a difficult affair.

(2) Non-participation in government loans. This item of non-co-operation was aimed at unbalancing the monetary status of the government.

(3) Boycotting of law courts by Congress and by litigants. It would amount to the suspension of legal practice by

lawyers and the settlement of civil disputes by private arbitration. It is conceived as a weapon for further lowering the prestige of the government as well as a starting point for a new authority.

(4) Boycott of government schools and colleges. This step would provide the movement with a crop of youthful recruits and at the same time check the influence of academicians who are paid to instil loyalty in their charges.

(5) Boycott of the legislative councils. Outstanding and able politicians would, as a consequence, come out to work among the people instead of wasting their time in impotent debates. By withdrawing from the legislatures, the leaders are likely to rob the government of such status as is bestowed by their participation.

(6) Withdrawal from government service. The refusal on the part of Indians to accept or to continue in any civil post would bring the entire administration to a standstill. From the tiniest village up to the capital city, there would be left only a few, if any, governmental officials to enforce the will of the state and to collect its revenues.

(7) Withdrawal of men from the army and the police. The state, without the indispensable assistance of coercion, would be virtually emasculated. Anti-militarism would further threaten the existence of the state should a *coup d'état* be attempted.

The non-co-operation programme for the period, 1930-1932 contained all these items together with that of withdrawing co-operation from British banks, shipping, insurance and other concerns. Many more items can very well be added in response to new needs and different situations. Countries other than India, in case of a Satyagraha, might follow quite another series of stratagems of non-co-operation to meet their special conditions. The success of non-co-operation will always correspond to the degree of universality of its acceptance. When fully successful, "Non-violent

non-co-operation," to use Gandhi's words, "is the method whereby we cultivate the freest public opinion and get it enforced."

When the established order is paralyzed as a consequence of non-co-operation by the people, the Satyagrahis are ready to deal the final blow in their programme of non-violent direct action.

10A. OSTRACISM

Ostracism, or social boycott, is a weapon of the community against its members who refuse to join in the general programme of non-co-operation with the opponent. Thus he who refuses to non-co-operate is non-co-operated in turn. It is generally justified on the ground that by siding with the community's enemy he has forfeited all the privileges that are the result of community life. The technique, in a somewhat different form, has been used in the Western world by strikers against the "scabs." In the latter use, the weapon has been used generally as a form of intimidation. In India, this technique has its roots in antiquity. In fact the birth of the institution of untouchability is ascribed by some scholars to the Hindu practice of social boycott or excommunication of the offender.

Ostracism as such is a spontaneous by-product of the general attitude of non-co-operation. The Satyagrahic use of it does not tend to penalize the dissenter but to remind him of his unsocial attitude. Consequently, no physical harm is done him or his relatives. Satyagrahis even see to it that the primary needs of the person ostracized—food, shelter, and clothing—are provided for. Otherwise, he is a political pariah beyond the pale of social intercourse. He has, however, a standing invitation to recant. Gandhi personally does not look upon this practice with favour. He has declared himself against its use.

II. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

A government paralyzed by organized non-co-operation awaits its destruction through the Satyagrahic manoeuvre of civil disobedience. What remains of a state after a successful onslaught of non-co-operation is nothing more than a formal structure. It is up to civil disobedience to shatter that structure as a prelude to a new order. The phrase "civil disobedience" was coined by the American moralist, Henry Thoreau. According to the author of *Walden*, civil disobedience to unjust laws is the duty of all citizens. In Gandhi's hands, however, the technique has outgrown its original import. It has become a revolutionary weapon for destroying an undesirable political order.

By refusing to obey the statutes of the state, the Satyagrahis deny the existence of the established order. One by one, or simultaneously, the important laws and decrees of the state are broken, so that eventually the entire "rule" is uprooted. It is important, Gandhi has insisted time and again, that only unpopular and obnoxious laws be broken at the beginning of a Satyagraha. This restriction insures the eventual conversion of government men who are at heart in agreement with the Satyagrahis as to the injustice of the laws in question. Only the breaking of unjust statutes attracts the sympathy of the general public and favourable world opinion.

Conforming to Gandhi's idea, only the Salt Law, the Forest Law, and the Revenue Law were included in the 1930 civil disobedience programme. These laws, moreover, touched and consequently affected the great majority of the people, so the active support of the populace was insured. A considerable part of the officialdom, both in India and in Great Britain, also thought the laws outrageous. James Ramsay MacDonald, to take only one example, had denounced the Salt Act in his books and public

utterances before he came to power. It was the habit of Gandhi and other lesser leaders to quote MacDonald, who was then Prime Minister of Great Britain, in support of their opposition to the obnoxious law. Needless to say, the British Premier was not the only person who lent himself to the embarrassment that attends self-contradiction. This dulled the edge of the government's retaliation. In the later months of the movement, even the Press Act and the statutes governing proscribed literature were disobeyed. And then followed an attack on as many laws as possible.

No government is likely to allow a deliberate breach of any of its laws, much less a programme of disobedience. It will fight for its very existence. It will strike back with all the coercive measures at its command.

A government faced with civil disobedience would arrest and imprison all lawbreaking individuals and groups. The Satyagrahis, in that eventuality, have pledged not to defend themselves but are expected to accept the punishment willingly. But how many people can a state arrest? Not the entire population. Jails and detention camps overflowing with inmates who deliberately sought imprisonment constitute an effective device for neutralizing the coercive agencies of the state.¹

A government baffled by the necessity of imprisoning more people than is physically possible resorts to organized violence as a means of "enforcing law and order." The Satyagrahis are dragged through the streets and flogged publicly. They are charged upon and trampled by mounted

¹ Months after the conclusion of the 1921 campaign, Sir George Lloyd, then Governor of Bombay, in an interview with Mr. Drew Pearson, said:

"Just a thin, spindly, shrimp of a fellow was Gandhi! But he swayed three hundred and nineteen million people and held them at his beck and call. . . . He preached nothing but ideals and morals of India. You can't govern a country with ideals! Still that was where he got his grip upon the people. He was their god. . . . He gave us a scare! This programme filled our jails. You can't go on arresting people forever, you know—not when there are 319,000,000 of them. And if they had taken his next step and refused to pay taxes! God knows where we should have been!" Quoted from Kirby Page, *Is Mahatma Gandhi the Greatest Man of the Age?* New York, 1930, p. 14.

police. Here and there a head is laid open. To these forms of oppression the Satyagrahis submit themselves willingly and with beatific faces. Many are wounded and injured for life, but the Satyagrahis refuse to retaliate, and they refuse to desist from their activities.

The absence, however, of any sort of physical resistance deprives the attacker of an immediate incentive, much needed if he is to continue his act of violence. He loses his momentum, and feels himself ridiculous and baffled. According to Richard Gregg: "Non-violent resistance acts as a sort of moral *jiu-jitsu*. The non-violence and goodwill of the victim act like the lack of physical opposition by the user of the physical *jiu-jitsu*, to cause the attacker to lose his moral balance. He suddenly and unexpectedly loses the moral support which the usual violent resistance of most victims would render him."¹ The non-violent spirit of the Satyagrahis bothers the opponent's conscience and makes a tangle of his habitual behaviour patterns. Finally, either in disgust or in righteous indignation, the attacker quits his job.

From personal experience the author can bear out Mr. Gregg's observations. The writer saw scores of policemen and hirelings of the government refuse to harass or beat or trample non-violent resisters who broke the salt monopoly in 1930, and has also witnessed cases in which even the so-called heartless Pathans, imported from communities of unlike interests, quit their duty of mowing down the battalions of Gandhi-volunteers by baton charges either in utter disgust at their unromantic and ridiculous position, or in righteous indignation aroused by the sacrifices made by the Satyagrahis. There have been cases of men who, after starting out as hirelings of the government, joined the ranks of the Satyagrahis and became non-violent soldiers. The writer has heard

¹ Richard B. Gregg, *The Power of Non-violence*, Philadelphia, 1934, p. 43. For the psychological analysis of non-violence, see especially the excellent chapter, *Moral Jiu-jitsu*.

scores of policemen confess to him that it was their "stomach that made them do the dirty work." Had they any other means of making a living, they would continue, they would quit the job and become *Gandhi-wallahs* themselves. In two cases, the present writer has witnessed his co-workers being sentenced by their own fathers who were judges in the British law courts. In one of the two cases, the son's imprisonment was quickly followed by the father's voluntary resignation from the bench and his subsequent participation in the very activities he had once penalized as a dispenser of justice. The superintendent of one of the jails in which the author was obliged to spend a few weeks was rumoured to observe frequent fasts, for his conscience bothered him. It was also said that his wife believed in Gandhi and in independence for India, and that a sort of a "family Satyagraha" was in progress in the official quarters outside the walls which the superintendent occupied.

My experience seems to be corroborated by the following abstracts from the dispatches of Negley Farson who, as special correspondent to the Chicago *Daily News*, eye-witnessed the 1930 Gandhi movement in India. Describing an incident in Bombay, he writes:

"One of the bravest things I have ever seen was the way those Hindus marched out on the field and grouped themselves in little knots. Hindus hate physical pain, but they knew what they were in for that day. Some of them quite confidently believed that they would soon be dead. In each group the Indian women, in their orange robes of sacrifice, made a thin ring around the men. They would have to be hit first. . . .

"In a few seconds that field was a shambles of reeling, bleeding men; men holding their heads with blood oozing down between their fingers, men trying to ward off blows with their bare forearms . . . women shrieking and tearing at the policemen's clothes . . . throwing themselves before the swishing *lathis* (bamboo sticks). . . .

"Then I watched the *jatha* of the Sikhs. . . .

"The Sikh leader was like that statue of the gladiator in Rome; a Herculean man, with his beard tied to his ears. He was being struck on the head. I stood about six feet from him and watched. He was hit until his turban came undone and his topknot was exposed. A few more blows and his hair came undone and fell down over his face. A few more and blood began to drip off his dangling black hair. He stood there with his hands at his sides. Then a particularly heavy blow and he fell forward on his face. . . .

"I could hardly hold myself back. I wanted to grab that white sergeant's *lathi*. I stood next to him: he was so sweaty from his exertions that his Sam Browne had stained his white tunic. I watched him with my heart in my mouth. He drew back his arm for a final swing, . . . and he dropped his hands down by his side.

"It's no use," he said, turning to me with half an apologetic grin. 'You can't hit a bugger when he stands up to you like that.'

"He gave the Sikh a mock salute and walked off."¹

The author's experience seems to be further corroborated by the following abstract from the dispatch of Webb Miller, another American eye-witness, in the *New York Telegram* :

"Dharasana Camp, Surat District, Bombay Presidency, May 22 (by mail) . . . Amazing scenes were witnessed yesterday when more than 2,500 Gandhi 'volunteers' advanced against the salt pans here in defiance of police regulations. . . .

"Much of the time the stolid native Surat police seemed reluctant to strike. It was noticeable that when

¹ Negley Farson, in *We Cover the World*, edited by Eugene Lyons, New York, 1937, pp. 141-143.

the officers were occupied on other parts of the line the police slackened, only to resume threatening and beating when the officers appeared again. I saw many instances of the volunteers pleading with the police to join them."¹

A government unsuccessful in its effort to suppress Satyagraha by beating and other forms of violence, resorts to the more drastic weapon of shooting down those who engage in direct action. While using this method, as in the case of using other coercive measures, the police and the army have to deal with an entirely new type of enemy. Here the enemy does not shoot back, but falls a willing victim to bullets. As a result, numerous instances of soldiers and policemen throwing away their firearms appear in the pages of the history of Satyagraha in India. The most famous instance was provided by the "crack troops" of the Indian Army posted at the Northwest Frontier. In order to suppress the Satyagraha operation in the Frontier Province, a regiment of Garhwalis from the mountains of the United Provinces near the Himalayas, was ordered by the government to fire on a mass meeting of *Gandhi-wallahs*. The soldiers disobeyed the order and refused to open fire. Consequently the entire regiment was court-martialled. Some were sentenced to imprisonment varying from ten to fourteen years. The fate of the others is not known.²

After paralyzing the administration through non-cooperation and neutralizing the coercive agencies of the

¹ See also chapters on India in his book, *I Found No Peace*, New York, 1936.

See also, for further confirmation of Satyagraha's power of neutralizing and paralyzing the opponent's violence, accounts in:

Charles Dailey, special correspondent of the *Chicago Daily Tribune*. See *Chicago Daily News* of July 23, 1930.

George Slocombe of London *Daily Herald* in the Paris edition of the *New York Herald Tribune*, August 3, 1930. Also his chapters on India in *The Tumult and the Shouting*, New York, 1936.

S. K. Ratcliffe, in the *Nineteenth Century and After*, London, December, 1930.

² Dr. B. Pattabhi Sitaramayya, "*Mahasabhan Itihas*" (in Gujarati), Ahmedabad, 1935, pp. 523-524.

state through civil disobedience, the Satyagrahis embark on a programme of taking over the functions of the government one by one.¹

12. ASSERTIVE SATYAGRAHA

When the Satyagrahis begin to gradually take over the paralyzed functions of the government, the twelfth stage of the strategy of non-violent direct action is reached. During the operation of this measure, the Satyagrahis begin to discharge, partially at least, certain of the activities and functions of the state made stagnant by their own previous action.

During the 1930 movement, which came nearest to this stage, volunteer corps were organized in certain cities to officiate as traffic-conductors and as policemen. The Bombay Congress Committee in particular even worked out its own system of taxation over co-operating citizens. They also, in a few instances, punished by fine those financial interests which attempted to go against the Congress commands. In a number of villages, the authority of the old *Panchayats* (the Village-Five) was restored. The programme of "national education" was executed with a remarkable degree of success by establishing schools in many communities. Quite a few forfeited Congress Houses were reoccupied by Satyagrahis. Unorganized attempts were made to capture Government Houses. The famous Vadala and Dharasana incidents were precipitated by mass actions aimed at capturing government salt depots.

At this stage, however, a truce was made between the Congress and the British government in the form of the Gandhi-Irwin pact. Consequently the validity of this manoeuvre has not been fully tested in India.

¹ Whether Gandhi would include, at this stage or at any other stage, the instrument of *sabotage* is a moot question. It is my impression that he is against it. At any rate, there has been no instance of *sabotage* in the Congress movement for *Swaraj*.

13. PARALLEL GOVERNMENT

Parallel government is the full materialization of the programme of its immediately previous stage, viz., assertive Satyagraha. Herein the Satyagrahis establish a new sovereignty by replacing the established order. Parallel government is the community's act of taking over all the functions of the tottering government, thus squeezing the established order out of existence.

None of the Indian Satyagrahas has ever reached this stage. Consequently the ideology of parallel government has until now remained in its conceptual entity. It is implied in the programme of non-violent direct action, but as yet it has never been tried. It goes without saying, however, that parallel government is the culmination of a Satyagraha carried through to its logical conclusion.¹

14. A NOTE ON A POSSIBLE EXTENSION OF
THE PATTERN

The foregoing pattern of a successful Satyagraha has, from the very start, presupposed a common area of action and interest for both the opponents; it has been the delineation of the direct action employed by a community in revolt against an already existing foreign rule. This strategy, therefore, does not explicitly map out the non-violent operations of a sovereign state—a state which has incorporated Satyagraha as an integral part of its national policy—when faced with a fresh invasion from outside. Should such a suppositional victim of a hypothetical assault take the invasion supinely? Should such people wait until the invaders have occupied their territory, and established a government to start a Satyagraha?

The answer to these and similar questions is implicit

¹ See the diagram of the pattern of a successful Satyagraha on the next page.

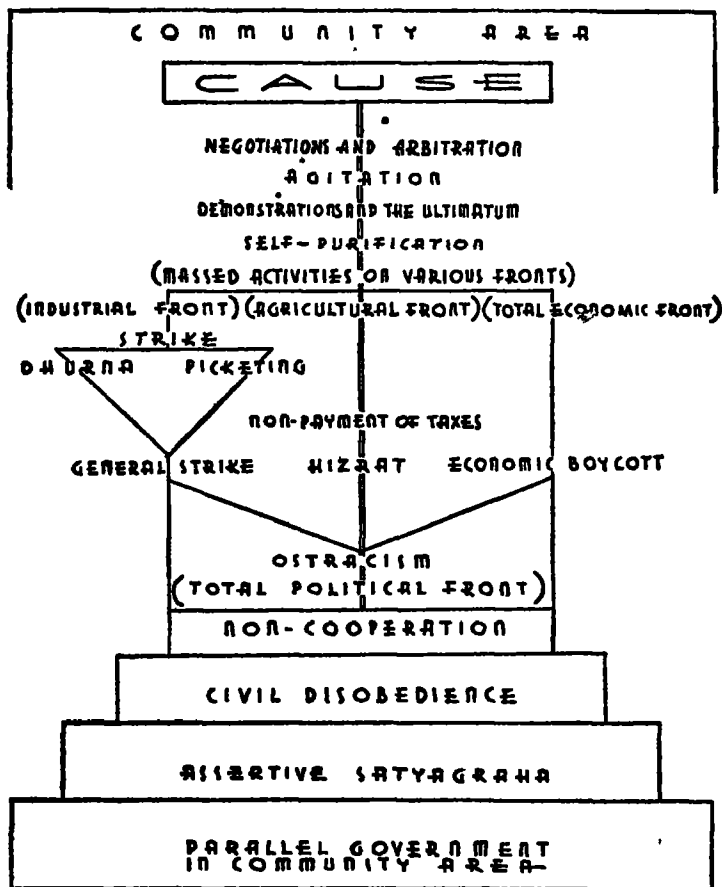


DIAGRAM OF THE PATTERN OF A SUCCESSFUL SATYAGRAHA

in the pattern of Satyagraha which we have presented. The same stratagems, slightly modified with the aid of human resourcefulness to suit new necessities, are likely to check an invading army or to paralyze its subsequent efforts at establishing a new order and authority. There being no historical evidence, we have to draw upon our imagination to fill the gap while keeping our feet firmly on the ground, the solid soil of our experiences in India, and in South Africa.

If an army should march upon a free country pledged to non-violence, the multitudes must be called upon to offer the same sort of resistance as the Satyagrahis have offered in India while defending their contraband salt depots. Thousands upon thousands would voluntarily lie down a hundred-deep on the frontier to be trampled under horses' hoofs or under iron tanks as well as under soldiers' boots. They would neither run nor physically resist the onward march of the enemy, but they would leave only one alternative to the invaders: you can march in only over our dead bodies! The non-violent soldiers would oppose the invasion with mass Satyagraha to the point of mass death if necessary, which would make the invasion a dreadful experience for all concerned. If the enemy's armed forces ride far above in airplanes to avoid an engagement with non-violent resisters, the Satyagrahis would employ the same measures at aerodromes. For the invaders have to alight some place, some time, to occupy the territory and to rule the people.

The power of such selfless, beatific and forgiving suffering has shown in India that armed men cannot sustain their violence against Satyagrahis for a long time. The invaders are likely to turn back at this stage. In case they succeed in breaking through the human wall and enter upon the arduous task of establishing a new sovereignty and of enlisting the community's loyalty, all the measures described in our pattern would be used to offset these efforts. From here on, the course of the invaded people's

counteraction would be more or less the same as outlined in our above pattern of a successful Satyagraha. For an area of action and interest, common to both the contending parties, shall have been established by this time. What is more revealing, the Satyagrahis do not have to fight against a well-established and organized rule. Their task is much simpler and easier. For they are only blocking the formation of a new authority which has still to enlist the loyalty and co-operation of at least a few representatives of the people violated in order to start the wheels of smooth government.

It must have been some such ratiocination which prompted Gandhi to comment on the recent Czechoslovakian crisis. Commenting on the Munich pact and the subsequent Czech capitulation, the Mahatma wrote in his *Harijan* of October 8, 1938: "The Czechs could not have done anything else when they found themselves deserted by their two powerful allies. And yet I have the hardihood to say that if they had known the use of non-violence as a weapon for the defence of national honour, they would have faced the whole might of Germany with that of Italy thrown in. . . . If India could gain her freedom through non-violence, as Congressmen are to believe they can, she could also defend her freedom by the same means, and hence so could a small nation like Czechoslovakia. . . . They can lose nothing by trying the way of non-violence. . . . I suggest that if it is brave, as it is, to die to a man fighting against odds, it is braver still to refuse to fight and yet to refuse to yield to the usurper."

In the Gujarati version of the same editorial Gandhi adds a few more arguments and adduces one or two historical examples in support of his thesis. Speaking of the powers concerned, he said to this effect: They know that men acquiesce before physical violence. But unarmed men, women and children refusing to submit to superior force, bearing beatifically the atrocities inflicted upon them without entertaining any malice, would be

a new experience to the powers that be. Speaking of the numerical weakness of the Czechs, Gandhi said to this effect: When I started Satyagraha in South Africa, I was alone. And even at the successful conclusion of the movement there, it was only 13,000 Satyagrahis who had triumphed over a mighty government. Referring to the armed stage of the Czechs, Gandhi wrote to the effect: At the bidding of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, 100,000 Pathans, mountaineers of the Northwest Frontier Province of India, famous for their militarism, threw away their arms and joined the non-violent movement of the Indian people of the plains.

It should be borne in mind in this connection, however, that Czechoslovakia's was a particularly difficult problem, for the Czechs had to fight, in Gandhi's words, "against odds." In cases where the power is less unevenly distributed, Satyagraha, like war, can certainly perform the desired task with greater ease and confidence.

Part II

SATYAGRAHA IN PRACTICE

CHAPTER II

GANDHI VERSUS THE GROUP

HOW IS A Satyagraha worked out? What historical facts can be produced regarding the successful practice of non-violent direct action? To which phases of social relationship has Gandhi's ideology been applied? How extensive has its practice in India been, and to what kind of social action has it lent itself?

These and similar queries will be answered in the pages immediately following as well as in two other chapters. They will be answered by illustrative evidence, that is to say, by brief narrations of various Satyagrahas that have taken place during India's last quarter of a century and in Gandhi's own life. It is to be hoped that these samples of Satyagraha will serve as a supplementary reference material for the context of the preceding theoretical formulations.

The scope of Satyagraha can be measured only by a consideration of the different kinds of conflict which have been successfully handled by Satyagrahic machinery. A difference in situation is bound to demand a corresponding modification of treatment. But if the weapon is sound and flexible, as war is regarded to be sound and flexible, it is bound to apply to a variety of conflicts. Various are the ways of classifying conflicts suited to the needs of the particular problems in hand. For our purposes, the classification has to be limited and cut to fit the social frame of reference. Consequently, we propose here to classify conflicts according to the nature of the unit of action pitted on each side, as follows:

Ev

- (1) An individual versus another individual; or an individual pitted against a group; or
- (2) A group pitted against another group; or
- (3) A community versus the state.

Satyagraha, as applied to the first type of conflict, man against man, is the subject matter of this chapter. The application of Satyagraha to the remaining two categories will be illustrated in subsequent chapters. Since no one has been a more thoroughly tested representative of the individual Satyagrahi than Gandhi, the father of the doctrine itself, illustrations from Gandhi's life will be our main evidence. The spotlight will be focused upon the lonely figure of Gandhi pitted against another man, or against a group, or a people. There could be no clearer illustration of the working out of non-violent direct action on an individual scale.

According to all accounts, Gandhi was a candid, sympathetic, thoughtful child. Even as a pre-adolescent boy, he was rolling over in his mind the question of social injustice. Soon after he entered his teens, Gandhi began to fight for his ideals in a manner peculiarly his own. What is now known as Satyagraha was, in the early years of Gandhi's life, nothing more or less than the *insistence upon truth* motif and the willingness-to-die ideal of one young *caste Hindu*.

But with the march of years, Gandhi's experiments assumed a more and more complex form and began to stimulate ever-increasing social changes. The growth of his popularity was nothing short of phenomenal, and the example set by his saintly life played havoc with the personal weaknesses of other Indians.

From his early childhood to this day, he has endeavoured to demonstrate that *insistence on truth* (which is the literal translation of the word "Satyagraha"), that is, insistence on one's rightful convictions, generates its own power. For without this internal resistance, we lack the strength to push away what the tyrant has the power to inflict.

Obsessed with this line of reasoning, Gandhi called his autobiography *The Story of My Experiments with Truth* in which most of the following episodes are to be found.

I. GANDHI FACES HIS TEACHER

Satyagraha, Gandhi insists, is a weapon known to mankind since time immemorial. Man has used it, perhaps without realizing it, in the daily business of living. He has used it against his wife, or his father, or a neighbour; and it has never failed him. Instead of retaliating when hurt by those he loves, man often suffers quietly, and waits patiently for the right solution. Dramatizing his own silent suffering, man has often achieved his ends without recourse to physical coercion. According to Gandhi, that is the simplest and most prevalent use of Satyagraha. To read Gandhi's life is to read a story that is studded with incidents in which personal dignity and honesty quelled all opposition. He goes way back to his high school days to unearth an anecdote which does, in all seriousness, show how an individual deadlocked with another individual can attain his ends by the simple method of insisting on his conception of truth.

Gandhi, as young Mohan, was one of those reasonable, well-bred boys who always rise in the estimation of the teacher and become favourites. In his first year in high school, a situation arose which proved that teachers can learn something from their little subjects. It happened when one Mr. Giles, an Educational Inspector of the district, had come on his regular tour of inspection to the school which young Mohan was attending. As a trap to find out whether the teacher in charge was doing his job efficiently, the inspector assigned the boys five words to write as a spelling exercise. One of these words was *kettle*, and Mohan could not recall the correct spelling. The teacher, who was prowling up and down the aisles, noticed young Mohan's indecision. Determined to have

a perfect response from the students, since he had no way of knowing whether his promotion depended upon the showing of this class, the teacher nudged Gandhi and indicated furtively that he copy it from his neighbour's slate. But young Mohan, like George Washington, could not be corrupted. When the tests were handed in, it was glaringly apparent that the perfect record of the class was marred by the word *kettel* on the paper of Mohan Gandhi.

Later in the day, Gandhi relates in his autobiography, he was called to the office of his instructor. He went expecting the worst, for he already had some inkling of the strange and devious ways of teachers. The instructor, on the contrary, praised Gandhi for maintaining his youthful integrity, and intimated that he had risen in his pedagogical esteem. Indeed the spelling teacher treated Gandhi with marked respect from then on.

2. GANDHI FACES HIS FATHER

Another example of the triumph of Satyagraha in the case of an individual pitted against another individual is furnished by Gandhi's encounter with his father at the age of fifteen. Similar situations are, perhaps, the common experience of us all—a fact which goes to show that the technique of Satyagraha has been frequently used by men in their daily dealings with the rest of humanity.

This time young Mohan was implicated through his brother whom he tried to help out of a tight place. It seems that Gandhi's elder brother had run up a debt of twenty-five *rupees* (roughly \$10.00). With his creditors getting nastier by the day, Mohan's elder brother was frightened. Finally, in desperation, he asked the future Mahatma what to do. Together they hit upon the idea of chipping a piece of gold out of the elder brother's amulet, a gift from his father. In quick succession, the fragment was pried loose, the debt was cancelled, the creditors were satisfied.

But after the deal was closed, the thought that he had sneaked his father's property preyed on Mohan's mind. He was convinced that he was a cheat and a little beast who had taken advantage of parental generosity. He resolved never to steal again, but that was not enough to restore his peace of mind. Finally, he decided to confess his fall from grace to his father. The possibility that the old man might collapse prevented Mohan from speaking directly. Instead he wrote a letter asking for a severe punishment and handed it to his father wordlessly.

The senior Gandhi was lying in his sickbed when young Mohan was ushered in with the letter in his hand. As his father read it, Gandhi recalls in *My Experiments with Truth*, tears poured down his wasted cheeks. The sight of his father's tears was too much for the youngster who crumpled up at the foot of the bed and also wept. In a few seconds, Gandhi tells, he felt his father's hand patting his back reassuringly. Confession and suffering had brought him his father's forgiveness.

3. GANDHI FACES HIS CASTE

It is obvious that the individual who resorts to Satyagraha has a greater chance of being the victor when he and another man reach the point of blows. Generally such an individual is of higher moral calibre, and he is better prepared to suffer consequences than is his opponent. A man, however, often finds himself confronted not by a single foe, but by a body of people. In such a case, there is an obviously uneven distribution of power between the two parties to the quarrel. The individual's chances for overpowering the opposing group are greatly reduced. If he resorts to violence, he is almost sure to be crushed. What will happen if he adapts Satyagraha to this situation? Are there any instances in Gandhi's life which illustrate the triumph of a single Satyagrahi over an opposing group?

The first instance of this kind followed Gandhi's return

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from London as a full-fledged barrister at law. He had been in England much against the wishes of his orthodox caste. Crossing the ocean was a serious breach of propriety according to Manu, the law-giver, whereas eating and drinking with the casteless Christians was unthinkable for members of Gandhi's caste.

The storm of protest caused by his voyage to Europe had not yet waned when he came home again. The verdict of the majority of his group was for excommunication. Despite the incessant demands of his family, Gandhi refused to offer any resistance to his critics; he amiably kept the caste regulations regarding dinner companions, and all the other taboos of excommunications. Thus, instead of harassing the group by creating cleavages of opinion, he convinced his caste that he meant no harm and was ready to obey its dictates.

The result of this scrupulous conduct was amazing. The *Banya* frigidity melted, and Gandhi soon had no occasion to be troubled by his caste. On the contrary, he received affection and generosity in return. What is more important, the few who still regard him as excommunicated worship him as a great patriot. When Gandhi called upon the Indian nation to offer Satyagraha to the British government, the response from his own caste of which he was no longer a member was so loud that Gandhi himself was surprised.

4. GANDHI FACES A BULLY

Another example of an individual Satyagrahi with his back against the wall facing a "gang" can be drawn from the South African chapter of Gandhi's career. Mr. Gandhi, then practising law in the Union, once set out for Johannesburg from Charlestown on an important mission. In those days, a stage coach was the only conveyance running between the two points. Hardly any Hindu travelled in it because it was customary for the

white group who operated it, as well as the white travellers, to treat the "brown man" as an inferior. But Gandhi, never conventional, decided to go by stage, as it was the only conveyance which would get him to Johannesburg in time. When it came to the matter of accommodations, the white "conductor" dismissed Gandhi as the "coolie" type, and decided against having him boxed in with the white passengers. Consequently, the man in charge hustled the little brown man up on the driver's seat outside.

After a few hours of jogging along, the "conductor" felt an urge to sit out with the driver himself, as he wanted to smoke, and possibly to have some fresh air. Without the slightest hesitation, he asked the present incumbent of that seat to sit on the footboard. Gandhi politely refused. To make the story short, the conductor swore at Gandhi and began to box his ears. Titillated, the other passengers looked on big-eyed. Beside himself at the discovery of this mirthful audience, the "conductor" seized Gandhi by the arm and tried to drag him down; whereupon, the latter entwined his fingers around the brass rails of the coachbox in a grip which only death could have broken.

Oddly enough, at this display of suffering, self-control, and what white men call "guts," a change came over the people inside the stage. They turned against the coach official and shouted, "Let him alone."

The conductor was crestfallen. His own kind had turned against him and sided with a brown "coolie." He dared not go in and face the sudden coldness of the passengers. He felt powerless to move Gandhi from his front seat. Disgruntled and red-faced, he settled himself in the seat he had wanted Gandhi to take—on the footboard.

At Johannesburg, some of the white passengers approached Gandhi and apologized. They also expressed their willingness to testify in his favour if Gandhi wished to bring suit against the man who had assaulted him. Gandhi thanked them, but admitted he was indifferent to any idea of revenge. He had already won his battle.

5. HE HAD ALREADY FORGIVEN

In South Africa, Mr. Gandhi was subjected to violence against his person on another occasion. It was customary in Johannesburg that none but the white could pass by President Kruger's house. Although the rule was primarily against the native Negroes, Indians also avoided President Street out of fear. But along came Gandhi setting out on his customary long evening walk. Quite unconscious that President Street was different from any other thoroughfare, Gandhi headed straight past the Kruger mansion. Before he knew what had happened, he was hurled to the ground. Looking up, he could see the President's guard. Blows rained upon him.

Just then one Mr. Coates, a white lawyer who had professional connections with Gandhi, happened to pass by. He hurried over and exclaimed:

"Gandhi, I saw everything. I shall gladly be your witness in court if you proceed against the man. I am very sorry you have been so rudely assaulted."

"You need not be sorry," replied Mr. Gandhi. And then looking at the police patrol who was standing dumbfounded, he added, "What does the poor man know? All coloured people are the same to him. He undoubtedly treats Negroes just as he has treated me. I have made it a rule not to go to court in respect of any personal grievance. So I do not intend to proceed against him."

The guard apologized to him for which there was no need; for he "had already forgiven him."

6. GANDHI FACES A MOB

Still another example of an individual taking a triumphant Satyagrahic stand against a group is furnished by Gandhi's behaviour in the face of a mass assault in South Africa. Moreover, the following incident shows

that the sacrificial suffering of one man is sometimes capable of bringing relief to countless others whom he represents. The greater the suffering of a subscriber to a cause, the stronger are the chances for the desired victory. It should be added that the more important the individual involved, the greater is the advancement of the cause. An unknown can die for his people without causing a ripple of excitement. But let an important man like Gandhi suffer the slightest of injuries at the hands of the mob, and the repercussions are bound to be tremendous. Therefore, the sacrificial suffering of the men at the top is of prime importance in the strategy of non-violent direct action.

In 1896, Gandhi made a hasty trip from South Africa to India in order to educate public opinion over the conditions of Indians in South Africa. He had delivered numerous speeches and had interviewed quite a few important people in India, both officials and nationalist leaders, with a view to rallying the mother country behind the cause of the Indians in South Africa.

On the very first day of his return to South Africa, he stepped into what could easily have been his final adventure. The Europeans in Natal, misinformed by Reuter, were enraged against Gandhi and seething for revenge. As soon as he was spied walking to his residence from the port, he was encircled by a crowd of European men and felled by a shower of bricks, stones and rotten eggs. At this critical moment, the wife of the police superintendent, who knew Mrs. Gandhi, happened to be passing by. This amply proportioned and magnificent white woman stormed over the prostrate Gandhi, spread her parasol to protect the dazed victim, stood between him and the crowd, dispersed the hecklers, and escorted Gandhi to his destination.

For several hours, Gandhi's residence was left in peace, but when night fell, a torch-light parade gathered outside the bedroom where Gandhi lay wounded, and

threatened to burn down the house. The police superintendent, realizing that the situation was out of his hands, dressed Gandhi in an Indian constable's uniform and smuggled him to a neighbouring shop. Gandhi takes time to comment in his book, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, upon the fact that the crowd at this juncture was singing:

“Hang old Gandhi
On the sour apple tree.”

Later on, the late Mr. Chamberlain, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, cabled asking the Natal government to prosecute Mr. Gandhi's assailants. In due course, Gandhi was asked to describe every face he remembered, a request which elicited the following reply:

“I do not wish to prosecute anyone. It is possible that I may be able to identify one or two of them, but what is the use of getting them punished? Besides, I do not hold the assailants to blame. They were given to understand that I had made exaggerated statements in India about the whites in Natal, and calumniated them. If they believed these reports, it is no wonder that they were enraged. The leaders, and, if you will permit me to say so, you are to blame. You could have guided the people properly, but you also believed Reuter, and assumed that I must have indulged in exaggeration. I do not want to bring anyone to book. I am sure that when the truth becomes known, they will be sorry for their conduct.”¹

It is a matter of record that the mobsters did regret their conduct afterward. Some of them apologized personally. Others assumed a more conciliatory attitude not only toward Gandhi, but toward Indians in general. Gandhi believes, and with reason, that he rose in their esteem through his spirit of forgiveness. Apparently Gandhi's coolness under fire did what a thousand im-

¹ Gandhi, M. K., *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. I, p. 453, Ahmedabad, 1927.

passioned speeches had failed to do—raised the position of Indians in South Africa considerably.

7. GANDHI FACES HIS FOLLOWERS

The effectiveness of sacrificial suffering as a means of improving the moral conduct of one's fellows is demonstrated in the following story from Gandhi's later career in South Africa. In those days, he was sponsoring an *Ashrama*, or a social service retreat, at Phoenix, as well as practising law in Johannesburg. One morning he received word of the indiscretions of a man and woman from the *Ashrama*. Shocked and heartsick, Gandhi's immediate reaction was to shoulder part of the responsibility, since he believes that the guardian is partly accountable for the moral lapse of his ward. Consequently, he taxed himself with a seven-day fast, and the elimination of all but one meal daily for one hundred and forty days thereafter.

His penance cleared the atmosphere and was the signal for a moral house-cleaning at the *Ashrama*. The members became more priestly in their behaviour than ever before; their devotion to Gandhi was quickened, and any subsequent desire to dally in worldly pleasures died a-borning.

8. SATYAGRAHA IN PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Many of Gandhi's experiences illustrate the soundness of Satyagrahic ideals when applied to professional ethics. There is a popular belief that truthfulness and honesty are of no great assistance in building up a business, especially in the field of the legal profession. Contrary to the popular idea, Gandhi's insistence upon the naked facts brought him marked business success and great prosperity.

It was Gandhi's custom as a lawyer in South Africa to take a case only after he had made sure that truth and justice would be served. He preferred to reduce his income rather than to take a part in litigation in which

he detected the slightest corruption. On one occasion when he was conducting a case before a magistrate in Johannesburg, he discovered that his client had deceived him, and that the claim he was defending was based upon the falsification of facts. Gandhi made no attempt to cover up his client's confusion, but turned to the magistrate and asked that the case be dismissed without any argument.

The judge expressed his approval of Gandhi's integrity. The client was so conscience-stricken that he begged Gandhi's pardon for having involved him in the "shady" affair, and from that time on, whenever the Indian lawyer appeared in court, the verdict was generally in his client's favour.

Another incident of a similar nature took place a few months later. One of Mr. Gandhi's clients was caught in the act of smuggling some goods ashore without paying duty. Forthwith, he went to Gandhi and beseeched him to save him from a long prison term. Gandhi took the case, but as a precaution, he went through his client's books. Unfortunately, the books recorded that the defendant had previously smuggled in much more than the customs officer was now claiming. Gandhi actually made his client confess everything to the customs officer and brought about a compromise.

Commenting on the incident, Gandhi says: "I was confirmed in my conviction that it was not impossible to practise law without compromising truth." Gandhi's assertion is borne out by objective evidence because he enjoyed one of the most prosperous practices in the South African law courts.

9. FAST UNTO DEATH

The most spectacular illustration of a single Satyagrahi emerging triumphant against a people and a government is provided by Gandhi's half-finished *fast unto death* undertaken in 1932. It was observed in the interests of the so-called untouchables of India, and it began on the 13th of September.

As a proper background for this fast and what happened afterward, one has to bear in mind that there is a strong group of people among the *caste Hindus* themselves who have dedicated their lives to the abolition of untouchability. The standard bearer and guiding star of this group is Gandhi. Their efforts have diverged into several channels. For one thing, they have fought in the legislatures for the enactment of laws which would declare the practice illegal. They have been behind the passage of several such bills, but the British viceroys have always quashed them with a veto. These *caste Hindus* have also established schools and colleges for untouchables and opened some of the Hindu temples so that the underprivileged may worship side by side with the Brahmin priest. They have convinced all but a few elderly orthodox Hindus that men without caste are their equals and that there should be no restrictions imposed upon the untouchables which would rob them of their civic rights.

This movement aims at the uprooting of untouchability from the very foundations of Hinduism. Its progress is, therefore, naturally slow and uneven as no age-old custom could be abolished overnight. Moreover, the Hindu reformers have to fight their battle without the support of the government which has failed to declare the practice illegal.

The slow but steady programme of the Hindu reformers, however, has failed to satisfy a handful of youthful leaders who seek to end untouchability by raising the educational and living standards of the outcastes. Dr. Ambedkar, trained at Columbia University, is the standard bearer of this group. The programme of Dr. Ambedkar's "wing" has gone a long way toward arousing the *caste Hindus* out of their lethargy. It has, however, switched the energy of the untouchables into seeking temporary relief and reforms instead of working toward the utter abolition of untouchability.

The clash of the two diverse philosophies came to a head during the second Round Table Conference in

1931. Along with the claims advanced by other minorities, the spokesman of the untouchables, Dr. Ambedkar, demanded specially reserved seats for the outcastes in the Indian legislatures. He also worked for a system of elections which later came to be known as the "Separate Electorates." According to this proposition, the reserved seats for the minorities were to be filled not only by their representatives, but by representatives who could be elected only by their respective racial and religious groups. Gandhi, as the sole representative of the National Congress, opposed this proposal and described it as an effort to disrupt the national unity of India. Eventually he withdrew his resistance to the plan in general, but made an exception in the case of the untouchables. "I can understand," Gandhi declared in his last speech before the Minorities Committee on November 13, 1931, "the claims advanced by other minorities, but the claim advanced on behalf of the *untouchables* is to me the unkindest cut of all. It means *perpetual bar sinister*. We do not want on our register and on our census *untouchables* classified as a separate class. Sikhs may remain as such in perpetuity, so may Moslems, so may Europeans. Would *untouchables* remain untouchables in perpetuity? I would far rather that Hinduism died than that untouchability lived.—Therefore, I want to say with all the emphasis that I can command that if I was the only person to resist this thing, I will resist with my life."

Nobody at that moment took Gandhi's threat seriously. In the absence of agreement on the part of the Indian representatives, the British Prime Minister decided the character of the electoral system in India. When he published what is now known as the "Communal Award," it became evident that he had given the untouchables a separate electorate. The Hindus felt this to be an effort to alienate the untouchables from them. According to Gandhi, it was the last straw, completing the disintegration of Hindu society and thereby breaking

the backbone of Indian nationalism. It was the Hindus who were responsible, in the eyes of Gandhi, for the unforgivable sins towards the 'untouchables'. It was, therefore, their painful duty, Gandhi argued, to make up for the wrong and to do away with the evil custom. To rob the Hindu community of its chance of abolishing untouchability, thought Gandhi, was a great injustice that the Prime Minister had done to India. It was a greater injustice still, not only to India but to untouchables themselves, Gandhi argued, that the Communal Award had made untouchables eternally so by giving them a permanent legal status. Gandhi and other reformist Hindus regarded untouchability as a passing phase, a dying custom; they, therefore, felt that their efforts were being wiped out by a stroke of the pen of the Prime Minister of England.

Gandhi, consequently, made good his threat. On the morning of September 13, 1932, it became known to India and to the world that Gandhi had commenced fasting unto death and that the only thing that could save his life was the modification of the British Premier's Communal Award. Banner headlines broke the news to a stunned India. The normal life of the entire people stopped, as it were, for the time being. There were mass meetings in each town, and resolutions were passed to abolish untouchability and thus save Gandhi's life. Orthodox Hindus embraced the outcastes, and the untouchables were admitted for the first time in history to hundreds of temples and thousands upon thousands of Hindu homes. Before the week's end, special prayers were being offered in many churches in England and America for the sparing of Gandhi's life. Every leader worthy of his name in India and each organization worthy of its existence cabled the Prime Minister to withdraw the objectionable part of his award. None, however, appealed to Gandhi to break his fast, for they knew that his mind was made up.

The leaders of the deprived classes and of the *caste Hindus* met in an emergency meeting at Poona where Gandhi was fasting in a jail. They made a pact according to the wishes of Gandhi and cabled it to England. The Prime Minister, startled by the awakening of India, withdrew the clause affecting the untouchables. Gandhi broke his fast at last, and the whole populace heaved a sigh of relief. Untouchability, as it was known in India, lost its significance and sanction. What remained was the lifeless structure of a past system. And even that was being demolished by the strong and eager hands of countless workers who took a vow to dedicate their lives to the cause when Gandhi sipped some orange juice after a foodless week that appeared to be a year. The fasting of Gandhi had accomplished for the untouchables and for India what the efforts of the reformists over a century had failed to achieve.¹

Gandhi, however, is not alone in demonstrating the use of Satyagraha on an individual scale. The nationalist movement in India has witnessed numerous examples of non-violent direct action being successfully worked out by stray individuals in their respective fights against a group or a government. Thus the hunger strike of Jatin Das resulted in his martyrdom, but it also compelled the government to work out radical reforms affecting political prisoners. Mr. Kelappan's fasts, to take another example, had tremendous effect in favour of the untouchables. There have been similar instances also in the West. The final dedication of Socrates was an individual's Satyagraha against the city-state. MacSwiney's hunger strike in prison during the Irish Home Rule movement is still another Western example of an individual employing Satyagraha against a government. Henry Thoreau's single-handed fight against slavery in Massachusetts, in the form of his refusal to pay taxes to a state which practised it, is one more Western evidence of the practical utility of Satyagraha on an individual basis.

¹ For a fuller account, see Pyarelal, *The Epic Fast*, Ahmedabad, 1932.

CHAPTER III

GROUP VERSUS THE GOVERNMENT

A GROUP PITTED AGAINST another group, according to our classification, runs one entire gamut of conflicts. There is massed action on either side in this type of struggle. When one such party employs the non-violent method with a view toward achieving its objectives, it naturally has to work out Satyagraha on a mass scale. Satyagraha as a form of group action, is the problem before us now.

In this form, Satyagraha can take place either (a) between a minority and a majority, or (b) between two economic classes such as the employers and the employees, or (c) between a section of the community and the government. The latter has been the most prevalent type of non-violent direct action in India, hence the title of this chapter. There have been, however, sundry instances of the other two types of conflict in which Satyagraha has been employed. Sufficient care will be taken, consequently, to deal with a variety of conflicts in order to disclose the workability of Satyagraha in connection with different problems staged under dissimilar situations.

I. SATYAGRAHA IN SOUTH AFRICA

The first experiment with the ideology of non-violent direct action on a group scale was performed in South Africa under the leadership of Gandhi. It was applied to a combination of conflict type-a and type-b; that is, it was used by the Indian minority in South Africa against

the European majority which constituted the government. Thus a small and comparatively weak section of the people was seeking redress from the government of the majority group. Although social and economic issues were involved in it, the prime objective of the Satyagraha was to secure political justice.

The South African Satyagraha commenced in 1906, and continued for eight years. During that span of time, to be sure, there were intervals of truce. The movement, however, did not terminate until 1914, when it resulted in a triumph for the Indians who utilized the weapon of Satyagraha.

The various grievances of the Indians in South Africa, however, were in existence for many years previous to the launching of Satyagraha. They began, in fact, with the Indians' first venture upon African soil. The first Indians to go there were attracted by the invitation of the European planters of Natal and by mine-owners who hoped to develop the country. These Indians came under a five-year indenture. They were bought in lots and put under contract before they left India. Behind their importation were the Indian agents of the European planters and industrialists of South Africa.

At the end of the five years under contract, the more aggressive and intelligent among them began to set up independent farms and small business concerns. Some of them had only tiny plots of land, but more often than not, these were covered with lush vegetables. Gradually they began to compete with the Europeans in many walks of life. Their ranks, moreover, were reinforced by many educated Indians who followed the pioneers with the intention of handling their retail business. In their wake came lawyers and doctors. By 1894, there were approximately 60,000 indentured, 10,000 ex-indentured and 10,000 free Indians in Natal alone, against 400,000 Zulus and 40,000 Europeans. And by 1906, the Transvaal harboured 12,000 more of them.

The reaction of the European population can well be imagined. They forgot that the Hindus had come there for their own imperial convenience. They also ignored the contribution of the Indians in the development of the agriculture and natural resources of the country. Now that the worst was over, they sought to hector the Indians out of South Africa. The Indians were badgered, robbed and threatened.

Over and above these extra-legal means, the Europeans engaged their best legal minds in framing a judicial move which would eventually drive all Indians out of the country. In 1906, the government of Transvaal introduced a bill in the legislature which would, upon its passage, require every Indian to be registered by finger prints. It would also require him, like a criminal, to produce his certificate of registration upon the say-so of any policeman at any time. According to the bill, the person who failed to register was to be deported.

Hardened to maltreatment, the Indians saw in this bill the beginning of the end of the Indian colony in South Africa. Consequently, they protested against its passage and demanded a hearing. The resolutions passed at the Indian mass meetings, however, fell on deaf ears; the government high-handedly passed the bill, an act which the Indians felt to be an unforgivable affront both to themselves as individuals and to the Motherland. Having failed to secure justice through negotiations and arbitration, the group searched for some sort of direct action. Armed rebellion was out of the question. For the Hindu in the expatriates looked down upon violence. Moreover, they had no training in the use of arms.

One day, without any idea as to the nature of the action to be taken, the leading Indians assembled in a mass meeting. The huge gathering was nervously expectant and mysteriously charged with excitement. But no one among them had any programme to offer. At this psychological moment, a small man took the floor. They

recognized him to be M. K. Gandhi, the English-educated Indian lawyer. Without a word of introduction, Gandhi shouted an oath that he would go to jail rather than obey the humiliating law. In an instant, the crowd was on its feet; here was action at last. With imaginations inflamed by the idea, one by one they bound themselves with similar oaths and pledges. They did not know it at the time, but their course of action later came to be known as *civil disobedience*.

The government of Transvaal, as might be expected, struck back with all its coercive might. Many were arrested, convicted and jailed. They even arrested Gandhi and imprisoned him. But more and more people followed the lead of the first group. Virtually droves of Indians disobeyed the law and sought imprisonment. Jails were overflowing with civil resisters. Thus one coercive organ of the state was paralyzed. The constant struggle of the Satyagrahis, moreover, prevented the law from becoming a *fait accompli*. Furthermore, the injustice involved was brought to the consciousness of the European man-in-the-street by the daily sacrificial suffering of the Indians. How often do we do injustice only because we can forget it immediately afterwards? If only there were some agency to remind us of the consequences of our forgotten acts! The Satyagrahis were using the psychological tactics of never letting the consciousness of injustice leave the opponent. Forced by the amount of public opinion aroused, General Smuts, then Prime Minister, visited Gandhi in jail and undertook to have the law repealed if the Indians would register of their own accord. The Indians agreed and did their part. The General broke his promise. But that is another story.

So the struggle went on. The Transvaal government passed more stringent laws to drive out the Indians. In 1913, a decision of the Supreme Court invalidated all Hindu and Mohammedan marriages. Its objective was to render all Indian children illegitimate and conse-

quently debarred from inheriting property. It was devised as a further measure for embarrassing the Indians so that they would leave the country and stop competing with their non-Indian neighbours. As in the previous case, the Indian community resolved to resist this law, too. But what is more significant, Indian women took a stand this time. Being a non-violent form of direct action, Satyagraha offered to women as well as men an opportunity to become active participants. The representatives of Indian women approached Gandhi and requested him to give them a start. In his answer to his countrywomen, Gandhi suggested the resumption of civil disobedience and economic pressure. The latter was brought about by strategy, and the Indian women were used as bait. Knowing that Indians were forbidden to pass from Transvaal to Natal, a column of these women not only crossed the Transvaal border, but actually began a vigorous picketing of the Natal mines. In due time, the matrons were arrested and imprisoned. When this incident was noised around, some five thousand Indian labourers came out of the mines and struck as one man. Controlling their fury, they started a march toward Transvaal on foot, a long line of Indian workmen, who sang religious and patriotic hymns as they watched for Gandhi's head as it appeared briefly now and then, bobbing up and down in the vanguard of the column. During the long march, Gandhi was arrested three times. Whenever the authorities intervened and removed Gandhi, the marchers maintained their own discipline and remained absolutely non-violent. Finally, they were all imprisoned. To the Satyagrahis, however, imprisonment simply meant that their day's work had been well done. For all the while they had been manoeuvring the government into exactly that step.

The imprisonment of Gandhi and his followers had its calculated effect upon public opinion. Both in South Africa and in India, influential spokesmen came out

openly on the side of the Satyagrahis. No one could ignore the fact that the miners had been beaten and wounded. Nothing could have been more effective than the dignity of the sturdy Indian labourers themselves, who remained calm and non-violent even in the face of the most humiliating treatment. As a result, Lord Hardinge, then Viceroy of India, defended the conduct of the Satyagrahis in a public speech, and scored the actions of the union of South Africa.

The government was in a delicate position. By and large public opinion was favourable to the Gandhi movement. Moreover, the tension in India was growing and the Union government was receiving a bad press all over the world. Just then a strike broke out among the European railwaymen in South Africa, and the government, struggling under this added load, was in a really serious predicament.

At this juncture, Gandhi came out with one of the master strokes of Satyagrahic strategy. As it has been pointed out before, the Satyagrahis must show kindness to the opponent in order to convince him that their intentions are good and that they are innocent of any hatred. In order to draw attention to the human bond and fundamental unity between the disputant groups, the Satyagrahis dedicate themselves to the service of the "enemy" when the latter is in difficulties. According to the dictates of any other ideology of action, Gandhi should have taken advantage of the enemy's troubles. But the Satyagrahic prescription for such a *contretemps* is aimed toward bringing about a *change of heart* on the part of the opponent. Conforming to Satyagraha's pattern, Gandhi chivalrously suspended the Indian struggle until the railway strike was over. The government fully appreciated the gesture, and many Europeans expressed their admiration for the spirit shown by the Indian Satyagrahis. Consequently, the Indian cause in South Africa was notably advanced.

Concrete results followed immediately. Forced partly by public opinion, and partly by the liberalization of his own attitude, a *change of heart* in Gandhi's phraseology, General Smuts yielded at last. Each important demand of the Indians was granted. The finger-print registration was abolished, the three pound head tax was repealed, and Hindu as well as Mohammedan marriages became valid once more. The restriction on the immigration of educated Indians was lifted, and the government promised to protect the rights of the Indians in South Africa by a just administration of existing laws.

That was the first application of the ideology of Satyagraha on a group scale, and its first success.

2. SATYAGRAHA "PREPAREDNESS"

For all subsequent appearances of Satyagraha, the scene now shifts from South Africa to India. For Gandhi went home in 1914, at the successful conclusion of his South African struggle. Sometime during 1915, he became acquainted with the grievances of wayfarers who found it necessary to cross the British line at Viramgam, a junction station in western India, on their way to the native states of Kathiawar. For the most part, these travellers were the subjects of the native Maharajahs. From all reports, the inspection of railroad passengers at Viramgam was thorough to the point of being insulting.

Some public-spirited inhabitants of the native states approached Gandhi and implored him to "please do something to end this trouble." They informed him that all their previous efforts at obtaining redress by agitation and petitions had come to nothing. Thereupon, Gandhi took the lead and went from village to village dropping "a hint that the people should be ready to offer Satyagraha at Viramgam, if necessary." At the same time he put the case of the people before the

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Viceroy through a constant bombardment of letters. The Viceroy was also informed by the C.I.D. (secret service) that Gandhi was preparing the masses for non-violent direct action, and that the people, consequently, were restive. Gandhi was promptly granted an interview by the Viceroy, and the question was settled amicably.

Here was a case where "injustice was remedied without recourse to direct action. The significance of the illustration, however, lies in the fact that the success was largely due to the "imminent possibility", of Satyagraha. As in the case of military manoeuvres, many times mere "preparedness" brings victory to a group disciplined in the art of Satyagraha and steeled in their determination to take direct action.

This fact was again in evidence two years later when Gandhi was leading a popular movement to get indenture repealed in India. It should be recalled that it was the practice of indenture, legalized by the Indian government under pressure from the European industrialists of South Africa, that exposed the Hindus to grave injustices by the Union government. The trouble which Gandhi found at home had been going on for some time before his advent upon the scene. Without a moment's hesitation, Gandhi called upon the people to observe the 31st of May, 1917, as an All-India Indenture Day. Supplementing this action, Gandhi sent a deputation of influential women to the Viceroy. The Viceroy promised the group of matrons that the act would be repealed. This time also Satyagrahic "preparedness" was the impetus behind the women's committee that brought victory to the people.

3. THE CHAMPARAN SATYAGRAHA

The next notable application of non-violent direct action under the leadership of Gandhi took place in the

same year, viz., 1917. It was employed to settle a local question in the province of Bihar in northern India, and was aimed toward the solution of a dispute between two economic classes.

For a long time the Bihari peasants in the district of Champaran were treated harshly by the landowning local lords. For one thing, the underlings had to hand over in taxes much more than they could make from the soil. All the farmers, furthermore, were forced by law to plant $\frac{3}{20}$ of their land in indigo, a comparatively unprofitable yield. On the indigo plantations, especially, the conditions of the tenants and workers was miserable, beyond endurance.

The efforts of the local welfare agents failed to obtain a fair rental and wage scale for the farmers, whereupon they turned to Gandhi for help. He immediately hurried to Champaran with his friends to conduct an impartial inquiry before taking any action. His group set up their headquarters at the centre of the district and began to hold hearings. For several days they pursued this peaceful course without seeking any publicity in the press.

Nevertheless, the planters saw in his activities a serious threat to their dominance. Knowing that the farmers, if organized and enlightened as to their rights, might offer a formidable front, they persuaded the District Magistrate to issue a deportation warrant for Gandhi.

Gandhi had anticipated this move and had plotted his manoeuvres with it in mind. He had appointed a series of successors who, upon his arrest, would carry on the work. According to the plan, there was always to be a committee to take the place of its hapless predecessor.

When Gandhi failed to comply with the Magistrate's order, he was summoned to the court for trial. Gandhi pleaded guilty and closed his defence with the following words: "I venture to make this statement not in

any way in extenuation of the penalty to be awarded against me, but to show that I have disregarded the order served upon me not for want of respect for lawful authority, but in obedience to the higher law of our being, the voice of conscience."¹

The judge was in an exceedingly awkward position. The story was making headlines not only in the newspapers of the province but throughout the country. The judge shuddered at the thought of possible consequences should he stop a peaceful and lawful inquiry conducted by such a prominent man as Gandhi. He deferred the verdict. Meanwhile, the governor of the province came to his rescue and ordered that the case be withdrawn. He even went further and appointed a Government Commission to inquire into the complaints of the farmers. The governor insisted that Gandhi be on the commission to represent the interests of the peasants.

The commission unanimously reported in favour of the farmers and recommended that the grievances be removed immediately. Thus the whole struggle ended in favour of the Satyagrahis who had been completely non-violent.

4. SATYAGRAHA AS LABOUR'S WEAPON

Inspired by Satyagraha's success in a "class war" such as the Champaran struggle, the workers the country over became interested in Gandhi's new weapon. Heretofore, they had always been able to fall back upon the strike, certainly a form of direct action. Quitting the job, however, lacked that certain *aura* of spirituality, and the strikers usually failed correspondingly to arouse an entirely favourable public opinion. Some of the labour leaders in India, therefore, looked to Satyagraha as something which would impart an overtone of moral justification to the ruthless struggle between the classes.

¹ Gandhi, M. K., *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Volume II, p. 379.

A concrete experiment soon followed. No sooner had Gandhi completed his Champaran campaign than an invitation came for him to champion the mill-hands of Ahmedabad, the *Manchester of India*. The workers there had grievances of long standing. Wages were low, and the consequent poverty of the mill workers was ruining their lives. They had their organizations, and their leaders agitated vociferously. But the employers remained adamant, and no improvements were forthcoming. The local leaders, therefore, requested Gandhi to try his method in a conflict between two economic classes, the mill workers and the mill owners.

What Gandhi suggested to the workers was essentially a strike, but a strike of a different calibre. It had to be a Satyagrahic strike which aimed at "changing the hearts" of the employers instead of forcing their hands as is usually done in the case of labour war. Consequently, he imposed four conditions upon them before he would consider a walk-out. He bade them to:

- (1) Maintain peace at all times and to relinquish all thoughts of violence,
- (2) Refrain from harassing or molesting blacklegs or scabs,
- (3) Refuse to depend on public charity or alms for their maintenance during the course of the strike,
- (4) Remain firm and unbending no matter how long the strike continued.

As for their livelihood and that of their families, it should be earned by honest labour outside the mill; should the food be insufficient, the Satyagrahis were to accept starvation as a form of sacrificial suffering.

When the workers pledged themselves to abide by these four conditions, Gandhi took the helm and sanctioned the strike. The struggle went on for twenty-one

days, during which Gandhi kept in constant touch with the employers. Such consultations, even during the course of a struggle, are indispensable in Satyagraha. They are tactical moves to induce a "change of heart" on the part of the opponent.

During the fourth week, the strikers began to show signs of weariness and slackness. Some of them deserted the ranks and resumed work on the employers' terms. Gandhi could not bear to think that his followers were breaking their pledge to him. Since they had taken the oath at his behest, he felt it his duty "to save his followers from the sin of breaking the pledge." So at a mass meeting, he declared: "Unless the strikers rally and continue the strike till a settlement is reached, or till they leave the mills altogether, I will not touch any food."¹

The entire audience was dumbfounded. It was horror-struck at the prospect of incurring the responsibility of Gandhi's suffering and possible death. The "slackers" realized their mistake and went on strike more vigorously than ever before. The mill owners, on their part, also became more concerned and queasy. Their consciences began to bother them now that the moral appeal of Satyagraha was made clear. Moreover, the general public was finally convinced that justice lay on the side of the workers. Consequently the employers approached Gandhi and made an agreement. A just settlement was thus reached after twenty-one days of strike. What is more important, no ill effects of the struggle remained on either side.

The Ahmedabad success of non-violent direct action indicated that Gandhi's ideology has a mission even in the field of class struggle. Such a victory might well throw a doubt on Lenin's contention that the bourgeoisie is beyond repair. Still more important is the line of thought that was suggested at Ahmedabad. It became

¹ Gandhi, M. K., *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Volume II, p. 421.

evident that so far as the workers are concerned (or, for that matter, any group weaker than its opponent), they are better off with non-violence than with violence. In other words, the workers have more chances of obtaining their ends through Satyagraha than through armed rebellion. For one thing, the capitalists or the vested interests have everything on their side when it comes to physical force. Given an excuse to match their brawn with that of the workers, the ensuing carnage will wipe out any trace of the labour movement and many of the labourers. But above all, the workers have more time, both for organization and mediation under non-violence than under an ideology which encompasses bloodshed, and is not, consequently, smiled upon by the public at large.

5. SATYAGRAHA AS THE PEASANT'S WEAPON

Satyagraha is not for the worker alone. It is equally pliable in the hands of the peasant. It was very successfully utilized by the farmers of the Kheda district in Bombay Presidency during the 1916-1917 campaign. The conflict was economic in nature but it had its political aspects also. The disputants were, on one side, peasants, on the other, the government. The issue involved called for the suspension of the payment of land revenue to the government for one year.

The rains were disappointing that season, and the crop failure which followed was so severe in the entire area that a condition approaching famine was imminent. The farmers, feeling that they could not possibly pay their taxes, petitioned the authorities for leniency. Their demand was justified by one of the land revenue laws, as well as by the parched fields. But the powers that be were in no mood to listen to their demands, and had every intention of gathering the revenue as usual. The local leaders, finding that their concerted efforts

could not budge the officialdom, helplessly sought Gandhi's guidance.

Gandhi, at this time, was president of the Gujarat Sabha, a civic organization functioning in that part of the country. He entered into a lengthy correspondence with the government but without constructive assistance. He received, on the contrary, insults and threats from the commissioner of the province. There was only one course open to him now if he were to secure justice for the farmers. He advised them to take non-violent direct action.

The programme consisted of a blanket refusal to pay the taxes and a sturdy endurance of whatever tragedy might ensue. No sooner did the farmers line up behind the tax boycott than government coercion began. The attachment officers sold the peasants' cattle and other property in order to extract the taxes. There were cases of Satyagrahis who were beaten and reports of more subtle punishment. But the people refused to waver from their purpose. The reign of terror attracted wide publicity, and aid to the farmers began to pour in from neighbouring districts. The government could not fail to notice that there was every possibility that the campaign might spread into other areas. Finally the government gave in and agreed to suspend the revenue assessment for the year. Thus the farmers achieved their objective without shedding a drop of blood, and without firing a shot.

Like the worker, the farmer also has better chances of obtaining redress through non-violence. Let him so much as hint of violence, and an armed force of boundless magnitude would descend upon him. The farmer, moreover, has fewer chances to organize than the urban worker in the hub of society. And armed revolt depends more heavily upon organization and concerted action than does Satyagraha, since Satyagraha does not have to be rehearsed.

6. SATYAGRAHA AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Successful in these instances of class conflict, Satyagraha has several times been utilized to level caste inequalities. The most notable experiments of the sort were carried out in a Native State of southern India. It took place in a village called Vycom, in the state of Travancore. Although the Maharajah and his government were comparatively liberal and progressive, the people leaned considerably toward orthodoxy, and the traditional southern struggle between the Brahmins and the non-Brahmins flourished lustily. It was, however, in the Brahmins' treatment of the untouchables that the clash reached serious proportions and called for action.

The immediate issue revolved around the civic rights of the untouchable. It seems that a highway, which meandered through Vycom and led eventually to the residence of the higher castes, touched at one place in its course the "Untouchable Quarters." Near-by was a temple where the Brahmins worshipped. In order to save themselves and their gods from pollution, the Brahmins had forbidden the pariahs to use the highway. The tradition had held for so many centuries that even the untouchables had come to regard it as the proper order of things. Some of the public-spirited reformers of the region were keenly aware of the snobbishness involved, and gently tried to remedy the situation. Perhaps it was at the back of their minds to make a test case of the Vycom temple.

They approached Gandhi and requested him to lead a reform movement to mitigate the hardships of the untouchables of Vycom and thereby advance the cause of the "depressed classes" all over the country. Owing to his illness, Gandhi declined to take over the active leadership but agreed to guide the movement from afar.

He explained to the delegation his plan of action and then sent it back with full instructions.

The first manoeuvre of the reformers, who were higher caste Hindus themselves, was to saunter along this highway with a few untouchable friends of theirs. The reformers led the procession and the untouchables followed in files. They passed by the "Caste Quarters" and came to a full stop in front of the temple. Naturally the orthodox Brahmins could not take this breach of propriety calmly. Boiling with rage, they attacked the procession, and saw to it that some of the reformers were severely beaten and others handed over to the police, on the charge of encouraging illegal trespass. All were duly sentenced for various terms of imprisonment. When attacked, the Satyagrahis bore the violence calmly and without returning a blow. When tried, they pleaded guilty and accepted the punishment in the spirit of sacrificial suffering.

The public was informed of the incident through banner headlines. The news aroused widespread indignation even in the outlying regions of the country. Volunteers poured in from all over the country to fill in the gaps created by the arrests. The Maharajah's government, therefore, stopped all arrests, but instructed its police not to allow any reformers to enter the road. The Satyagrahis, in turn, consulted Gandhi and resorted to a novel form of resistance. They stood in front of the police and pleaded with them without interruption. They organized themselves into shifts so that the police were never left unattended. Consequently, the keepers of the law had to organize themselves into shifts in order to keep the highway patrolled every hour of the day and night. The assignment of the Satyagrahis was to remain completely non-violent, and they were even expected to help the police when necessary. Gandhi hoped to expose the moral defences of the policemen as well as of the orthodox Brahmins.

The struggle went on for several months. The Satyagrahis stood their ground even during cascades of rain. Sometimes they stood shoulder-deep in water. The suffering of the Satyagrahis had its visible effect on the orthodox Brahmins. First they pleaded with the Satyagrahis to try to see the traditional point of view. Then they brought food and clothing for the civil resisters. Nevertheless the Satyagrahis refused to be mollified until the right of the untouchables to use the highway was recognized by the Brahmins. Finally the Brahmin gave in, saying, "We cannot resist any longer the prayers that have been made to us, and we are ready to receive the untouchables." Thus the Satyagraha won for the untouchables their civic rights. The repercussions of the victory were felt all over the country, and the cause of social reform was materially boosted.¹

7. THE BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA

To return to the field of agrarian grievances, in 1928, Satyagraha was successfully employed by the peasantry

¹ A party is apt to lose even in an armed conflict if it is under-manned. A minority is generally crushed in violent warfare. So if Satyagraha cannot win the cause of a small and comparatively weak group, it should not be held as a special weakness of non-violent direct action. For it is men, in the final analysis, who have to fight either violently or non-violently. However, as has already been pointed out, a minority is better off with Satyagraha than with violent resistance. It must have been some such belief that prompted Gandhi to comment on the recent pogroms in Germany. According to the *New York Times* of December 7, 1938, the Mahatma suggested "If I were a Jew and were born in Germany and earned my livelihood there, I would claim Germany as my home, even as the tallest Gentile may, and challenge him to shoot me or to cast me into a dungeon. I would refuse to be expelled or to submit to discriminating treatment." That in such a situation Satyagrahic measures are likely to serve the purposes of an oppressed minority, Gandhi has no doubt. He has, moreover, some historical evidence to corroborate his contention. Talking to the Pathan Premier of the Northwest Frontier Province of India, Gandhi is quoted as saying in the *Haryana* of October 22, 1938: "In South Africa a small band of 13,000 Satyagrahi countrymen of ours were able to hold their own against the might of the Union Government. General Smuts could not turn them out as he was able to do with the 50,000 Chinese who were driven out bag and baggage in less than six months and that without compensation. He would not have hesitated to crush us if we had strayed from the path of non-violence."

of the Bardoli district in the Bombay Presidency. The conflict took place between a group and the government, that is to say, between the farmers and the government of Bombay. An unjust increase, at least, so it seemed to the farmers, in the rate of land revenue was the issue.

The government had decreed that the standard of agricultural taxation should be raised 22 per cent. In actuality, however, the increase exceeded 60 per cent in many cases. The farmers contended that there was no corresponding increase in their income, and consequently, the rise in tax rates was unwarranted and unjust. Moreover, it was contrary to the better judgment of the Joint Parliamentary Committee appointed by the government itself in 1919. What is more, the Bombay Legislative Council had codified its objection to any increase in the taxes to be paid by the farmers. The agriculturalists of the district, therefore, petitioned the government to appoint an impartial and independent committee to investigate the technicalities of the situation. The government, however, took no notice of the farmers' request, but went ahead with its plan to collect more taxes.

Driven to desperation, the farmers resolved to offer a Satyagraha with a view toward obtaining redress. As Gandhi's services were not available at the time, their choice fell on one of his ablest lieutenants, Sardar Patel. Gandhi, however, gave his blessings to the movement and kept a close watch during its development. Later he visited the district and made several speeches.

True to the pattern of Satyagraha, Sardar Patel's first act was to give the authorities one more chance. When his appeal fell on deaf ears, he, on behalf of the 88,000 peasants, issued an ultimatum and made it clear that his men would resort to direct action unless the government reconsidered its stand. Again unsuccessful in getting the desired response from the government, he

set about indoctrinating and disciplining the farmers. It was evident from the outset that the struggle would be a long, sustained and difficult affair. Consequently, a well-controlled but lusty organization was indispensable.

Fortunately for the farmers, there were already four Gandhi *Ashramas* (agencies for social and educational service) in the district with their respective forces of trained workers. The centre was covered by the strongest of the four, and all corners of the area but one were taken care of by the remaining three *Ashramas*. Following a preliminary conference with his aides, Sardar Patel issued instructions to open additional camps at strategic points. A central publicity bureau was established in the town of Bardoli. The arrangement provided for a daily news bulletin in which Sardar Patel's speeches would be published in pamphlet form. These were to be distributed gratis to the agriculturists from one end of the district to the other, but there was a small charge for outside subscriptions. The news letters had an unpretentious beginning, but in short order it had reached a circulation of 14,000 copies, 4,000 of which went outside the district. The national press, moreover, was reproducing the speeches of Mr. Patel in full.

A force of local talent was put behind the composition of songs which might stimulate the enthusiasm of the people. Important tenets and triumphs of non-violent direct action were woven into poetry and given a musical score. Ballads celebrating Satyagrahic chiefs such as Gandhi were also printed on handbills and distributed to the crowd. Several choirs were trained in the art of travelling from village to village in a bullock cart to sing Satyagrahic hymns at the numerous meetings.

Besides the "general staff" composed of expert disciples of Gandhi, and the principal workers supplied by various *Ashramas*, the agriculturists spontaneously raised volunteers from their own ranks. Over these volunteers

were appointed two hundred captains whose duty it was to maintain strict non-violence, and to keep the men at headquarters informed. The volunteers went to the farmers individually and secured their signatures to the "Satyagraha pledge" which bound them to fight to the finish, but in a completely non-violent fashion. Hand-picked representatives from the ranks of the volunteers were to collect the information, go on tour with the heads of the camps, and bear personal messages from place to place.

Having completed the preliminary plans and laid the foundation of the organization, Sardar Patel gave the signal for Satyagraha. The primary action for the peasants lay in their refusal to pay taxes to the government until a just settlement had been made. They were also to engage themselves in securing the resignations of as many *Mukhis* (village tax-collectors) as possible. The government struck back with all the force it could muster. It tempted several of the Indians with bribery and flattery, but without the anticipated results. It tried to play one Satyagraha committee against another with the intention of wrecking the solidarity of the combating group. The strict discipline of the volunteers and the vigilant eye of the leaders proved to be unsurmountable obstacles.

Then a reign of terror began. The Satyagrahi farmers were fined and imprisoned. They were publicly flogged and dragged through the street. The civil-resisters bore all this quietly and without a counterattack. New recruits from the farms volunteered and soon there was no more room in the government jails. Experts from outside the district poured in to take the place of the arrested leaders. Thereupon the government officers began to seize the property of the farmers. All household goods which they could lay their hands on were taken out of the homes and sold. Cattle were driven out of the barnyards and dispatched to outside markets and

to slaughter houses. Practically every inch of the peasants' land was forfeited, and over 14,000 acres of it were sold at auction. But the general public sympathized with the Satyagrahis and it was hard to find a bidder for additional confiscated acres.

The farmers remained firm in the face of the most violent treatment. Some of them had lost their homes; others had lost everything they owned. At this juncture, Sardar Patel tried another manoeuvre of Satyagrahic strategy. When the suffering became unbearable, he advised the farmers to make a *Hizrat*, that is, to emigrate *en masse*. So the majority of the farmers and their families, with whatever belongings they could carry with them, went out of the district to live in the territory of the adjoining state of Baroda. The government came to a standstill after its shocked realization that there were very few left to be governed.¹

A vigorous programme of ostracism and social boycott, another of Satyagraha's manoeuvres, was also wielded against the "conforming" farmers as well as against government officials. Those socially boycotted found it very hard to lead a normal social life in the midst of a community at war. Of course they were physically safe and were even aided medically by the Satyagrahis. In many cases the latter supplied food and clothing to the non-participants. That, however, increased the conflict in the minds of the "social pariahs" and made their consciences even more uneasy. In many cases, some of them resigned from their posts and joined the Satyagrahis.

Thus the government found it more and more difficult to "maintain law and order." It could not rally enough men to run the routine of the administration and to collect taxes. Its attempt to import hirelings from outside further alienated the community. In many cases, some of the hirelings themselves resigned and went

¹ See the map of the Satyagraha organization and the government reprisals on page 103.

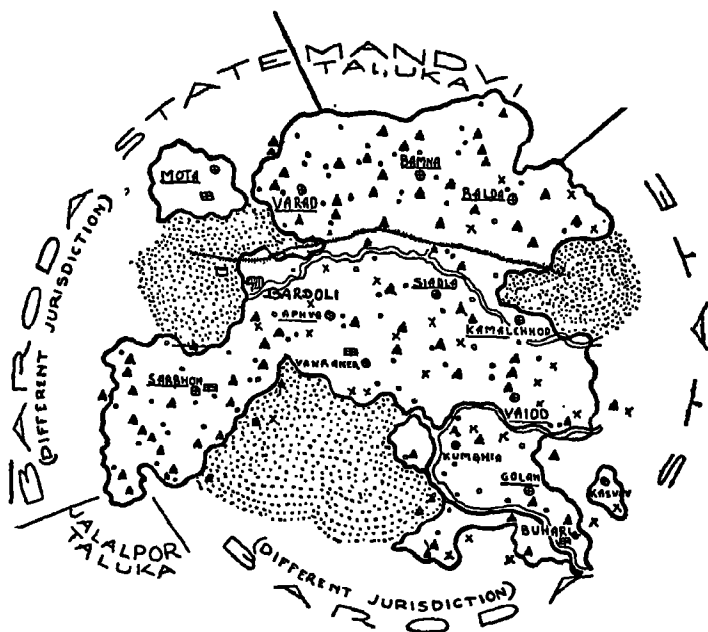
home. The national press, moreover, had informed the general public as to every minute development of the movement. The stories of government atrocities had created a general furore. Even the officialdom at Delhi, the capital of India, was now divided into two camps as to the best method for coping with the Satyagrahis.

There was only one course open to the government now—to yield. So after five and a half months of continuous struggle, the government had to grant practically every demand of the peasants.

8. SATYAGRAHA IN THE NATIVE STATES

Most of the Satyagrahas discussed and described above have taken place in the so-called British India, that is, in the eleven great provinces directly ruled by the British government of India. The Native States (areas directly ruled by the 560 big and small semi-independent hereditary Indian Chiefs, Rajahs, Nabobs, and Maharajahs who, in turn, owe their allegiance to the British Crown) were not, until very recently, troubled by a Satyagraha of any formidable magnitude. Although the nationalists in British India and the so-called "malcontents" in the Native States have been opposed to "the feudal autocratic Indian States system, which has long outlived its day," they left the Maharajahs alone for reasons which are irrelevant here.

Today the tables are turned. The scene of the nationalist activities has shifted from British India to the Hindustan of the native rulers. The National Congress is now the governing party in seven out of the eleven great provinces, with partial control over two more provinces under coalition ministries. Its revolutionary role, consequently, seeks its expression in the erstwhile neglected regions of the legendary potentates. Roughly two-fifths of India—around 712,000 square miles—belongs to the hereditary rulers. Their "subjects," however, number



MAP OF BARDOLI TALUKA (SUB-DISTRICT)

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| ■ DIVISIONAL VILLAGE | ▲ FORFEITURE NOTICES |
| ● SATYAGRAHA CAMPS | ⬢ MIZRAT TERRITORY |
| • ATTACHMENTS AND PENALTY NOTICES | ✕ LAND DECLARED FORFEITED AND SOLD |

MAP OF BARDOLI SATYAGRAHA ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT REPRISALS

around 80,000,000—roughly one-quarter of the total population of India. Although there are a few white exceptions, by and large the Native States are governed with the iron fist by the local despots, and the people's demand for a liberal government has always fallen on deaf ears. With the proposed Federation of all India—British India and the India of the princes—on the constitutional horizon, the states' peoples have started to put the sanction of non-violent direct action behind their demand for representative government in the Native States. And the Congress high command in the British India has rushed to their aid with men, money, and seasoned leaders. As the Congress now absolutely controls seven provincial governments, it can also exert indirect official pressure in behalf of the peoples of the Native States.

The first of the series of Satyagrahas in the Native States took place in Mysore, a progressive state on the southern tip of the Indian peninsula, around the middle of 1938. During the course of the movement, the state police once or twice opened fire on a band of demonstrators who insisted on hoisting the flag of the Indian National Congress party in defiance of a magisterial order. Instead of crushing the movement, the drastic measures made the Mysore incident an all-India issue. Both the State government and the people's party invited Sardar Patel, ranking leader of the congress party in British India, to arbitrate. As a result of the Sardar's intervention, the people of the state emerged triumphant. The local Congress committee was given legal status and was sanctioned to carry on its propaganda for representative government in the state. They were allowed to hoist the nationalist flag in their rallies. In quick succession there followed a Satyagraha in the neighbouring State of Travancore on the same issue and with similar results.

Another Satyagraha followed in Udaipur, a Rajputana state in northern India. The people of the town

of Nathdwara started a general strike to back their demand for representative government. An order came from the Rana's capital to open fire on the agitators. The chief of the local police, however, defied the order and refused to shoot unarmed Satyagrahis. Subsequently he went to Udaipur to receive the penalty for his defiance and was arrested. Three hundred soldiers were sent from the capital to suppress the "mutiny." But the general strike has continued for the last three months and, at the time of this writing, the conclusion of the movement seems remote. Still another Satyagraha is in progress in Alwar, another Rajputana State.

In Dhenkanal, the ruler employed drastic measures to suppress the agitation for representative government. The police opened fire on unarmed crowds on more than five occasions. To this, the populace answered with the Satyagrahic measure of *Hizrat*, or mass emigration. The ruler was left behind to govern dead sidewalks, deserted houses, and untilled farms. Triumphant in his Rajkot struggle, Gandhi charged the Rajah of Dhenkanal with having exercised "fiendish cruelty." The Viceroy took the hint and ordered the Rajah to take a year's holiday. The people's party is back at work toward responsible government now that the Rajah is temporarily deposed.

Another civil disobedience campaign is in progress at Jaipur, a prosperous Rajputana State with a population of 2,400,000 people. The capital, Jaipur, is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and the Maharajah there belongs to one of India's oldest dynasties. The British prime minister of the ruler is determined to prevent even the movement for propagating the ideal of responsible government. He has promulgated bans on the people's party. On one occasion, baton charges were administered to a procession of 22,000 men and women. In an hour of relaxation, the Briton volunteered to a relative of the present writer to the effect: "There is

hardly much difference between violent aggression and non-violent direct action, except for the fact that the latter is more difficult to cope with." Rumours have it that he is on his way out.

By the end of 1938, even Hyderabad, the premier State south of Bombay, ruled as it is by the richest man in the world, the Nizam, was invaded by the Satyagrahis. The boundless resources of the Nizam were being matched by the Congress by sending *Jathas*—groups of Satyagrahi marchers—in the State from British India. When the Congress party called off its struggle in order to concentrate on Rajkot, the *Hindu Mahasabha*, a communal body of the Hindus, took up the Nizam's challenge. Several of such *Jathas*, as well as scores of local leaders, have been arrested by the Nizam's government. The movement, however, continues to grow stronger.

When even Hyderabad, the premier State, was attacked by the "direct action" of its subjects, the world of the Maharajahs became alarmed and began to perceive in these scattered conflicts a systematic move toward the abolition of the States system as such. "There is no half-way house," they heard Gandhi declaring, "between responsible government and the complete extinction of the Native States system." Consequently, they met in councils to evolve a plan of concerted counteraction. At the Bombay meeting of the Chamber of Princes, the Maharajah of Bikaner mooted the suggestion of a common police force for a group of States, and exhorted his fellow rulers not to place great reliance on co-operation and help from adjoining British territories as the nationalists were supreme there and they naturally would not like to help Indian States. Subsequently, the Maharajah of Vijaynagaram, using cricket lingo, advised his fellow potentates to conclude the match before the wickets were down.

9. THE RAJKOT INCIDENT

The most significant Satyagraha, launched with a view to winning "representative governments in the Native States under the aegis of the ruling princes," found its battlefield at Rajkot, a key state on the western coast of India near Bombay. Realizing that most Maharajahs were organizing themselves into a solid block to counteract the popular movement, the nationalist party deftly called off struggles in other States and asked the nation to concentrate on Rajkot.

Although a comparatively small State (area: 282.4 square miles; population: 75,540), Rajkot was chosen because it has long been under the indirect influence of Gandhi. It was the place where Gandhi received all his education up to the matriculation from the State high school, and where his father was the prime minister for many years. "Make a test case of Rajkot," ran the headlines in nationalist newspapers. "We will decide the fate of all Kathiawar States at Rajkot," declared Sardar Patel, the guiding spirit of the movement against the Maharajahs, and Gandhi's trusted lieutenant in the Congress high command.

It was a long-drawn-out struggle at Rajkot between the insurgent people and the forces of the Thakore Saheb, the Ruling Chief. There were several cases of drastic measures by the Thakore's police. There were "*lathi charges*" (beating the Satyagrahi crowds with long bamboo sticks), wholesale arrests, and one or two shootings. The mounted police charged on the peaceful processions of Satyagrahis on more than one occasion. Foreign observers witnessed non-violent resisters lying down voluntarily under the horses' hoofs, and receiving the baton blows without retaliation, and without taking to flight.

On November 8, 1939, a procession of non-violent resisters was stopped on its way to the Palace by the

State police and ordered to disperse. The marchers refused to comply with the command of the authority which they, for the time being, were opposing. They sat down on the avenue and dared the police to make them leave. The police started to beat the Satyagrahis with bamboo sticks. Women being in the vanguard, they were the first victims. Thereupon, the men from behind came forward and formed a human wall encircling the group of women. When they were mowed down with lathi blows, another batch of men came forward to take the place of the fallen non-violent warriors. Defeated, the police stopped their charge and withdrew. Subsequently, the police inspector himself resigned as a protest against the policy of his boss, Thakore Saheb.

After three months of bitter struggle, the ruler of Rajkot gave in and invited Sardar Patel to the Palace for negotiations on December 26, 1938. The English prime minister of the ruler was ousted by the time Mr. Patel got through with what was described in the Indian press as his "Palace Revolution." The ruler agreed to concede the "widest possible powers to our people consistently with our obligation to the Paramount Power (British Crown) and with our prerogatives as a Ruling Chief." To this end was to be appointed a committee of ten, consisting of three officials of the State, and seven popular leaders to be recommended by Sardar Patel. The whole of India hailed this victory as the starting point for responsible government in the Native States.

However, the rulers all over India saw in the capitulation of Rajkot the beginning of their end. They brought pressure to bear upon the young Thakore Saheb of Rajkot. Mr. R. C. Gibson, British Resident in the States of Western India, also opposed the Patel-Thakore agreement. The result was that the ruler of Rajkot, "contrary to the terms of the covenant," rejected the seven members proposed by Sardar Patel, and the fight was on again.

On February 3rd, Mrs. Gandhi, originally a "subject

of Rajkot," inaugurated civil disobedience by courting arrest. Thereupon, farmers from near-by hamlets marched to the capital city and they were soon imprisoned. The ruler's police, reinforced by the units supplied by the British government, were taking a heavy toll in the form of cracked skulls and broken limbs. What nationalist newspapers described as the "reign of terror" had focused the attention of the entire nation on Rajkot. The air was rife with rumours, some plausible and others wild. According to one story, a justice of peace was forced to resign because of his failure to issue an order permitting the police to open fire. According to another hearsay, a newly appointed jail superintendent sought to resign rather than to comply with an order to mix slow poison with the food to be served to the Satyagrahi prisoners. The politicians in the jail were reported to have gone on a hunger strike as a protest against the humiliating treatment given them in the confinement. The nationalists charged that the ruler of Rajkot was a virtual prisoner of the British Resident, and that the latter was responsible for the whole trouble. At last Gandhi announced: "The struggle now is not between the ruler and his people, but in reality it is between the Congress and the British government represented by the Resident who is reported to be resorting to organized 'Goondaism'" (Gangsterism).

It was soon apparent that Gandhi himself would take the helm of Satyagrahic operations at Rajkot. On the eve of his appearance on the battlefield, Gandhi wrote a letter to the Thakore of Rajkot, and characteristically addressed the thirty-year-old ruler as "my dear son." In the letter he recalled that even the present ruler's late sire regarded him as his own father. The late Thakore had followed Gandhi's advice to the detriment of his relations with the British government.

On his arrival at Rajkot, Gandhi tried his formula of "personal contact" with the opponent. As a result, the

Dowager Queen, the Thakore's mother, came to the people's side and condemned the policy of repression. Thus the solidarity of the royal household was shattered. When negotiations failed to redress the wrong, Gandhi decided to employ the *self-purification* measure of a fast. According to Gandhi, fast is "the sincerest form of prayer. It does not mean coercion of anybody. It does, of course, exercise pressure on individuals, even as on the government; but it is nothing more than the natural and moral result of an act of sacrifice. It stirs up sluggish consciences and it fires loving hearts to action. Those who have to bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings cannot do it except by raising a ferment in society."

Exactly a month after his wife's arrest, on March 3, 1939, Gandhi began his "fast unto death which only the recantation of the ruler can stop." Bewildered by Gandhi's sudden action, other political leaders approached the Marquess of Linlithgow, Viceroy of India, to intervene. Meanwhile the nationalist ministry of the Bombay Province threatened to resign unless the government at Delhi intervened, and thus created a precedent of a provincial government taking a hand in the internal affairs of a Native State which happens to be geographically within the province. The remaining six Congress party ministries were expected to follow the lead given by Bombay, and India was on the rim of a national crisis.

After a fast of ninety-eight hours and twenty-five minutes on the part of Gandhi, the ruler of Rajkot gave in to the people's demand and agreed to carry out the terms of the original Thakore-Patel pact, this time with the Viceroy of India as witness. While the populace of India rejoiced in Gandhi's new lease on life, the native princes received another blow to the existence as a result of the nationalists' triumph at Rajkot.

That Gandhi would not have to carry his "fast unto death" actually unto death was a foregone conclusion

with astute observers of Indian affairs. For they all agree that there is no power in India today strong enough to shoulder the responsibility of Gandhi's death, nor 'an authority callous enough to risk the consequences of the Mahatma's martyrdom. Apuly remarked the New York *Times* editorially: "The outcome of Gandhi's latest fast illustrates once more the power of 'the terrible meek.' Brutal compulsion tramples out resistance over much of the earth; but in India, at least, fear that one man's flickering eyelids might close forever is still enough to change state policies."

The reasons for this sudden storm over the Native States (described in the Indian press as the *Yellow Revolution* because States are painted yellow on the map of India in contrast to the pink hue of the British territory) are not hard to find. The Congress party, especially the left wing, has always been against the Maharajahs who are fast becoming anachronisms in a rapidly changing India. With their eyes on the coming Federation of British India as well as the India of the Native States, the nationalists have become all the more outspoken in their denunciation of the autocratic rulers. Their main opposition to the coming federal part of the constitution is directed against the plan of bringing the nominees of the feudal lords to sit side by side with the democratic leaders elected by a popular vote in the central legislature. The nationalists fear that the nominees of the Maharajahs together with the nominees of the British government will constitute a solid anti-democratic and reactionary bloc.

There were only two courses open to the nationalists in order to avoid the proposed union with the princes if they were not to reject the second half of the constitution outright. In the first place, they can either persuade or force the British government to amend the act so that the representatives of the "subjects" and not the nominees of the Maharajahs would be sent to the federal legislature. In the second place they can create such a situation in

the States themselves that the rulers cannot disregard popular sentiment and that they will have to select popular leaders instead of their own yes-men to represent them on the federal councils. The Congress party resorted to the second course without giving up the first, and won a significant victory at Rajkot as the result of Gandhi's fast.

The outcome of the various Satyagrahas in the Native States still remains to be seen; most of them are in progress at the time of this writing. Some of the States, such as Radhanpur, Junagadh, and Aundh, have already announced a measure of representative government to forestall any serious clash with the nationalists. These operations of non-violent direct action are directed against some Indians themselves in place of an alien authority. The chieftains of Satyagraha, therefore, expect easier victories than in struggles against foreign elements. For in these cases, there is a stronger "community of interests" among the opponents. This factor has manifested itself in practical forms. There have been many cases of *family Satyagrahas*: a wife fasting so that her husband would resign from the bench of a state that oppresses the struggling Satyagrahis; a son coming forward to be beaten by his father, the police sergeant; a brother boycotting a brother who continues to serve in the council of the Maharajah; a caste excommunicating a member for his support to an administration which oppresses his own kith and kin.¹

There have been in India, in addition to these sample cases, sundry other instances, more or less of minor significance and scope, of the successful utilization of Satyagraha on the basis of a group pitted against another group or the government. Thus the Satyagraha of the population

¹ For these very recent illustrations of Satyagrahas in the Native States, I have depended mainly on newspaper accounts, magazine articles and editorials, the *Newsletter* of the All-India Congress Committee, Allahabad, and letters from friends who have been actual eye-witnesses. The book, *Indian Princes Under British Protection* (London, 1929), by P. L. Chudgar (my maternal uncle, by the way), who was the Fifth Dictator in the Rajkot Satyagraha, and who was subsequently imprisoned by the Thakore's government, will serve as a good background for the problem of the Native States in India.

of Kotgarh, a small town at the foot of the Himalayas, culminated, in 1921, in winning economic justice for the people. The Akali Sikhs of the Punjab regained their religious privilege of keeping a *Kirpan* (dagger) through their non-violent direct action of 1922. The 1927 Flag Satyagraha at Nagpur was also successful in securing the people's right to parade the Indian National Flag. And then again, there was in recent months the non-violent direct action of the untouchables near the gates of the *Rama Temple* in Nashik, which, after a long and weary siege, resulted in a triumph for the depressed classes.

In the Western world as well, there have been a few instances when non-violent direct action, employed to solve a conflict involving two groups or a group and the government, has scored notable triumphs. Thus Francis Deak, a Hungarian Catholic, with the aid of his followers, succeeded considerably in bringing justice to Hungary from Emperor Franz Josef toward the close of the nineteenth century. Deak's method was largely peaceful and involved direct action of the non-violent variety. The Finns, to take another example, conducted a non-violent campaign from 1901 to 1905 against Russian oppression. Victory came to the Finns in 1905 in the form of the repeal of the conscription laws imposed upon them by the Tzarist regime. Still more recently, the continuous non-violent resistance of the Quakers in England against army recruitment secured the exemption of "conscientious objectors" in the Draft Act of 1916. And then there was the Russian general strike of 1905 which secured the promise of the First Duma. In 1920, the German socialists organized another general strike against the Kapp Putsch and succeeded in adding a few years to the life of the republic. Again in Germany, the workers masterfully convinced the French, albeit non-violently and with the aid of the resultant favourable public opinion in other countries, during the latter's Ruhr occupation in 1923, that military force is not the only power.

CHAPTER IV

COMMUNITY VERSUS THE STATE

IT IS A revolution when the community rises against the state. The destruction of an undesirable established order is then the issue. Following upon the heels of its accomplishment comes the replacement of the crumbling administration by the people's government. Then it is that the revolution is consummated.

The community versus the state, which constitutes the final category of conflicts according to our classification, is a contest which has raged throughout the various histories of the civilized peoples. New nations have emerged in its aftermath, or the old ones have been assimilated by some other expanding states. It has claimed the undivided attention and painstaking analysis of many an outstanding philosopher and political economist. It has also left its indelible bloody streaks on the annals of many nations.

Violent overthrow of the government has been the only method popular with revolutionists irrespective of their creed, nationality or race. Almost to a single instance, all revolutions have resulted in carnage. What is even more significant, violence has never stopped at the conclusion of a revolution. It has had to be employed even during the aftermath, that is, when the replacement of the established order by the people's government has taken place. Born in a welter of blood, revolution also has to be consummated in blood.

In this carefully plotted and well-established pattern of revolution, the Gandhi struggle is perhaps the first

and only variation. That a revolution can be accomplished without resorting to violence is the vast stake involved in the Indian movement. The Indian community is led by Gandhi in a "non-violent revolution" against the British government. The experiment is thus carried out on a national scale, almost an international scale, as the natives' fight against the British government of India at times reaches the dimensions of a struggle against England and the Empire. For the mighty resources of the Empire can be, and sometimes are, summoned to suppress the insurrection in India.

Instances of the employment of non-violent direct action on such a gigantic scale have been naturally few and far between. In fact there have been only two well-marked periods in the history of the *Swaraj* movement when Satyagraha has served as the instrument of the entire Indian community in its struggle against the state. The All-India Non-violent Non-co-operation Movement began in 1920, and continued up to the middle of 1922. Then followed the expected period of demoralization and despondency. It was, however, soon over, and various groups engaged themselves in spasmodic outbursts of Satyagraha. Their activities were restricted to small communities and the issues fought over were either local or secondary. It was not until 1930 that a call for general "mobilization" was sent to the four corners of India. The nation-wide struggle that ensued perfected the various techniques and demonstrated the workability of Satyagraha as a form of concerted action on a national scale. The struggle reached its triumphant apex in the form of the Gandhi-Irwin pact of March 5, 1931.

I. NON-CO-OPERATION MOVEMENT, 1920-1922

As our chief concern here is to comprehend Satyagraha in practice, our interest in the nationalist movement itself is secondary. The pros and cons of issues and

claims involved, therefore, bother us little if at all. To acquire a proper background for understanding the particular forms taken by non-violent direct action, however, a brief account of the various conflicts which precipitated the crisis on a national scale is necessary.

The beginning of the Indo-British relationship dates back to the closing decades of the seventeenth century. Attracted by the fabulous wealth of India, which also inspired the epoch-making voyage of Columbus, the directors of the East India Company decided around 1686 to "establish . . . a large, well-grounded, sure English domination in India for all time to come." Consequently, they obtained trading rights in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras from the Indian authorities. They began to purchase land, and without provocation or permission from the rulers of India, started the fortification of their trading posts. The latter were manned by armed British troops and by cannons, thus violating the trust of the natives. The subsequent friction led to the rise of Robert Clive who proposed stern measures against the resisting natives. In 1757, Clive defeated the Bengal forces at Plassey and appropriated a large portion of Indian territory in the interests of the Company.

Then ensued an era of unscrupulous plunder and exploitation by the Company men. The East India Company paid such fabulous dividends that its stocks rose to \$32,000 a share. All native competition was crushed. At a later period, the silk and cotton weavers of north-eastern India were forced to give up their craft so that Lancashire-manufactured cotton fabrics might enjoy monopoly with Indian consumers. In countless cases, the fingers of such weavers were cut by British soldiers so that they might never again become a serious threat to English manufacturers.

Swelling resentment finally broke down the endurance of the long-suffering natives. What was left of the Indian soldiery rallied in 1857, and struck at the British

forces in India. The English retaliated with organized strength and with the aid of Christian converts turned out by various missions. The rebellion of the natives was crushed with "medieval ferocity"; some 100,000 Indian lives were taken during the struggle as well as during the aftermath. The incident came to be known as the "Sepoy Mutiny" because it was a revolution which failed. India went under the authority of the British Parliament as a result, and was completely disarmed.

The resentment remained. The hearts of the people refused to be tamed. As another armed revolt was impossible, the energies and the discontent of the populace found an outlet in "parliamentary pursuit." This new trend resulted in the formation of the Indian National Congress in 1885. Albeit there were small scattered groups of young men in Bengal and the Punjab who believed that Mother India could be freed of her bondage by their terroristic activities. As a rule, what they got for their pains was added repression for their community and certain gallows for themselves. This cult, however, never received public support, and, consequently, could not spread its gospel. The violent revolutionists, moreover, have shown sufficient appreciation of the national situation and enough chivalry toward the Gandhi movement by suspending their activities whenever India has been engaged in a non-violent direct action.¹

Meanwhile the nationalists' organization was increasing its membership and strength by leaps and bounds. The main activity of these leaders consisted of an annual meeting held to pass formal resolutions. Their purely parliamentary activities received their first contact with militancy in 1905. That year, the ruling Britons decided

¹ Recently the so-called "terrorists" have recanted and declared themselves in favour of the sort of movement Gandhi is leading for the liberation of India. They have, in a letter written from their confinement in Andaman Island prison, renounced their original creed of violence and urged their friends to put teeth in the Congress movement. Similar confessions have come from Lothiana Conspiracy prisoners and some "détenus" of Bengal.

to divide the province of Bengal into two parts. The "Partition of Bengal" was to be effected with a view to securing the most beautiful and fertile land of India for the sole enjoyment of the British immigrants. This aroused the fury of the *Bengalis*, who, backed by the whole of India, called a vigorous boycott on British-manufactured goods. The struggle sent many to prison. Some were severely beaten, and quite a few disabled for the rest of their lives. This was the first time the Indian gentry had experienced the rigours of direct action. The agitation of the leaders and the vigorous use of economic pressure by the people at large were not in vain. The partition plan was repealed.

The success of the movement gave the Indian a taste of his own potential strength, which resulted in corresponding changes in his attitudes and aspirations. These, however, were soon to be vastly modified by the extraordinary situation created by the World War in Europe. India was called upon to do her duty by the Allies. The tone of the British Parliament as well as that of the bureaucracy in India was unrecognizably changed. Commands were tempered, and a volley of requests and appeals replaced them. Great promises of Dominion Status and war booty were given to India if she discharged her duty in the Empire's hour of trial.

India rose to the occasion. Men and money were rushed to the aid of the Allies. Later, when a serious crisis arose in the World War, India was again approached for additional aid. The prospects for the Allied cause seemed dark indeed, and unless more men and money came to their aid, there was no hope for victory. At this point, Lord Chelmsford, then Viceroy of India, invited various leaders to Delhi to join him in emergency deliberations. The purpose of this War Conference was to devise ways and means by which more Indians could be sent to the battlefields and additional Indian money poured into the coffers of the Allies. For

this, the populace at large had to be enthused and aroused to the pitch of frenzy. War propaganda could not be accomplished solely by officials or pro-British half-Indians. It could only be done with the aid of the popular leaders. Consequently, Gandhi, by this time the acclaimed leader of the masses, also had to be invited and utilized in spite of his Home Rule tendencies. Moreover, Gandhi was a personal friend of Lord Chelmsford, and the Viceroy had a deep-rooted faith in his sincerity. In those days the would-be rebel "prided in being and being called a British subject."

Gandhi attended the War Conference at the invitation of the Viceroy and supported the resolution drafted to help the Empire in its hour of danger. He apparently felt his course to be a short-cut to Home Rule for India. His position is made clear by the following paragraph taken from his letter to the Viceroy in connection with the above-mentioned conference.

"I recognize," Gandhi wrote, "that in the hour of its danger we must give, as we have decided to give, ungrudging and unequivocal support to the Empire of which we aspire in the near future to be partners in the same sense as the Dominions overseas. But it is the simple truth that our response is due to the expectations that our goal will be reached all the more speedily. I do not bargain for its fulfillment, but you should know, that disappointment of hope means disillusion."

All in all, India contributed \$500,000,000 to the Allied war machine. War loans to the value of \$700,000,000 were purchased by India in addition. Finished products to the value of \$1,250,000,000 were sent to the Allies' side from India. The sacrifice of India's manhood was still greater. About 1,338,620 Indians were dispatched to the various battlefields in France, Palestine, Syria

and Mesopotamia—178,000 more men than all the troops contributed by the combined Dominions of Canada, South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand.¹ Gandhi's health was utterly broken in working toward this great obligation.² India exerted herself day and night for an Allied victory and looked forward to Dominion Status.

The conclusion of the War, however, changed the whole picture. India was not only denied any part of the War booty but she was even denied admission to the League of Nations. The gullible American was convinced by British statesmen that the demand for membership in the League came from a few malcontents and that the populace at large was quite satisfied with the existing arrangement. And whose business was India, an internal problem of the Empire? Cruclest cut of all, India was not to receive Dominion Status as promised during the War.

Discontent grew by leaps and bounds. At this point, broken soldiers returned from the trenches with accounts of injustices and unequal treatment. In spite of unprecedented heroism and military acumen, no Indian received a commission—simply because he was an Indian. And all of them, they reported, were discriminated against by Europeans irrespective of rank and station. In India itself, the war boom was over and there was a general state of unemployment. Manufacturing tycoons, who had doubled and tripled their wealth overnight, forgot their abnormal profits of war-time and began to reduce wages and personnel. Consequently, the rumbling of discontent among the proletariat, audible in

¹ All these, however, were not volunteers. Virtual conscription prevailed in many parts of India, especially in the north and in the Native States.

² To many, Gandhi's attitude during the World War has appeared to be incompatible with his doctrine of non-violence. Some have interpreted his action as a paradox, while others have looked upon it as a contradiction and a form of opportunism. In his own mystic way, Gandhi made a supreme effort to explain the riddle. Whatever view may be taken, Gandhi's aid to the cause of the Allies should make one point clear: Gandhi is not a mere pacifist or a "conscientious objector."

pre-war days, grew louder. The teeming farming population of upper India, especially inhabitants of the Punjab, were resentful of the ravages made on their male population by enforced enlistment in the British Army. Even the upper middle class, savouring the fast-fading taste of power and profit, was resentful of the turn of events. The inevitable disillusionment had come at last, and India was again a seething volcano.

As if to add fuel to the fire, the report of the Rowlatt Committee was published at this critical moment. This committee was appointed by the government to ascertain whether special emergency actions were necessary to stamp out the revolutionary spirit of the people. The commission, composed of all Englishmen and no Indian, recommended drastic measures to deal with the growing unrest. The Rowlatt Committee advised the government to curtail the people's right to gather in large assemblies. Freedom of speech and assembly as well as freedom of the press were to be greatly reduced and in many cases forfeited. Imprisonment without trial, a distinct breach of the *Habeas Corpus Act*, was to be a common practice with the police and civil authorities.¹ All India was aghast and aroused to the pitch of frenzy. Was that the reward of their services during the World War, they asked?

When this report reached Gandhi, he was still an invalid from overwork on behalf of the Allies. He felt himself and India betrayed by the Britons. He was mortally wounded. It was at his behest, according to his own self-condemnation, that India had made such tremendous sacrifices during the War. Gandhi realized that he had misled the people in his ignorance of British duplicity. Consequently, he felt it his duty to the Indian people to keep the Rowlatt Report from becom-

¹ For some of the leading features of the Rowlatt Act, and for its comparison to the Star Chamber in England under Judge Jeffreys, see Sunderland, J. T., *India in Bondage*, New York, 1932, pp. 450-451.

ing a law. First from his sickbed and subsequently from innumerable platforms he denounced the bill as a breach of the *Habeas Corpus Act* and urged the people to resist it at every step. The government, however, forced it through the council and appended it to the laws of the land.

Driven to desperation, Gandhi called upon the people to offer a Satyagraha. A day was appointed for complete *Hartal* as a sign of mourning. Each village and every city in the country was to stop all normal activity for twenty-four hours and every adult was to observe a fast. Streets were deserted and shop windows shrouded. Mass meetings were held in the evening to denounce the act. Individuals were asked at these meetings to sign a Satyagraha pledge which bound them to disobey the act and such other laws as would be recommended by the nationalist high command. Finally huge processions marched through the "main streets" of India shouting revolutionary slogans.

The government struck back at the Satyagrahis in order to nip their revolt in the bud. Processions were stopped by the military at various places and large crowds were fired on at Delhi, Calcutta and Amritsar. Reports reached Gandhi that there was serious trouble brewing in the Punjab. At the invitation of the Punjab leaders, Gandhi started out for that province on a peace mission. He was arrested *en route* and brought back to Bombay. The Amritsar *Punjabis*, disappointed by the news of Gandhi's arrest, called a meeting to voice their protest. Two leading local leaders, consequently, were arrested and imprisoned. The undaunted populace, nevertheless, held a protest meeting on the 18th of April, 1919. Some 20,000 unsuspecting men, women and children gathered together in the Jallianwalla Bag, a walled-in garden with only one exit. All were peaceful and pledged to non-violence, and none among them was armed with even so much as a stick. Suddenly, General

Dyer, a British military officer, arrived on the scene with fifty picked soldiers armed with machine guns. He posted his troops at the only exit of the walled-in garden so that no one could escape. Without a word of warning, he gave orders to fire. About 1,650 rounds of ammunition were levelled at the peaceful gathering of men, women, and children at close range. The holocaust was over in a few minutes. When Dyer¹ withdrew, some 1,200 dead and 3,600 wounded were lying in the garden.²

When this news broke, India was stunned. The leaders felt at loss to find words strong enough to denounce the barbarous brutality of the government, and the people were numbed and sickened by the tragic picture of carnage. When the first horror of the incident was over, sympathetic spokesmen of public opinion rallied around Gandhi to devise ways and means of "compelling repentance" on the part of the powers that be. The first few steps, suggested by Gandhi, included: huge processions singing national songs and shouting slogans; mass meetings codifying their protest to the government action; and picketing of government buildings by women. The authorities, as expected, tried to suppress the growing tension by such coercive measures as arrests of the Satyagrahis, *lathi*-charges (cracking heads open with bamboo sticks), firing on crowds, and wholesale massacres. The next move of the Satyagrahis, therefore, was to dramatize their suffering and sacrifices.

Then came Gandhi's call for non-co-operation. The people were asked to withdraw their aid and support which made the administration possible. Those who had

¹ Later, back in England, the people of General Dyer's province raised 20,000 pounds and honoured him with a purse for his Empire-saving activities in India. Of course the House of Lords condemned him by a resolution for his "punishment" of the Indians.

² For a detailed and dispassionate account, see *The Hunter Commission Report* as well as the *Congress Commission Report*.

been rewarded by the government with titles and honorary offices were to surrender their privileges. Rich people were to refrain from buying government loans and the poor were asked to refuse any petty service to the local authorities. Lawyers suspended their practice and disputes were settled outside the courts. Government schools were deserted as the students decided either to go to "national institutions" or to the villages to carry on the *Swaraj* propaganda. Benches in legislative councils were unoccupied because the leaders were out among the people instigating non-violent revolution. A militant boycott of British goods was promulgated, coupled with a petition to the public to patronize indigenous products. Finally, Indians in government service, from high officials to petty tax-collectors, were asked to resign from their posts. Complete paralysis of the administration was the objective. This programme was further bolstered by the nationalist propaganda at work in the Indian Army. Soldiers were persuaded to sever connections with the undesirable aliens.

Momentarily, everything seemed to be going on smoothly. There was panic in government quarters and many of the administrative departments were at a virtual standstill. The cable wire between Delhi and Ten Downing Street hummed frantically day and night. George Lloyd, then Governor of Bombay, confessed later on: "Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world history; and it came within an inch of succeeding."

True to the pattern of Satyagraha, more militant manoeuvres were to follow. After non-co-operation had partly paralyzed the administration, the actual business of destroying the existing order was planned. This finesse was to be accomplished by non-payment of the government taxes and by civil disobedience of repressive laws. Bans on nationalist literature were to be disregarded, and the government monopoly of salt manufacture was

to be broken by mass action. The Rowlatt Act, the immediate cause of all this friction, was to be completely shattered.

But this could not be. In spite of Gandhi's constant and eloquent appeals to his countrymen to refrain from hatred and violence, in spite of his own peerless example, violence broke out. The reports reached him that the mob was beyond control of his Satyagrahis in several places. Riots had occurred in Ahmedabad and Viramgam. At Chauri Chaura, especially, the crowds, unaccustomed to non-violence, went mad and committed atrocities. Gandhi was stunned by this news, and in deep agony of spirit, concluded that the time was not yet ripe for mass non-violence. Then he decided upon the drastic step of calling a halt! This decision produced the utmost consternation within the ranks of his colleagues. Many regarded it as a sacrifice of the people's cause on the altar of an individual's ideals. However, Gandhi's decision prevailed and the Satyagraha was called off.

After a lapse of time, on March 18, 1922, Gandhi was arrested and tried on the charge of instigating the people to violence. He pleaded guilty in the following words: "The only course open to you, the Judge and the Assessors, is either to resign your posts and thus disassociate yourselves from evil if you feel that the law you are called upon to administer is an evil and that in reality I am innocent, or inflict upon me the severest penalty if you believe that the system and the law you are assisting to administer are good for the people of this country and that my activity is therefore injurious to the public weal."¹ The English judge imposed upon Gandhi the sentence of six years' rigorous imprisonment. He, however, added: "If the course of events should make it possible for the government to reduce the

¹ Krishnadas, *Seven Months with Mahatma Gandhi*, Volume II, Appendix B, p. 18, Bihar, 1928.

period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I."

Thus the first experiment with non-violent direct action on a national scale suffered an abortive end. Although it failed to obtain its immediate objective, it was immensely successful in awakening India to the consciousness of her own potential power. Moreover, the experience gathered during this non-co-operation movement paved the way for India's next great movement of 1930.

2. CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE MOVEMENT, 1930-1934

A lengthy period of reaction followed the apparent failure of the non-co-operation movement of 1920-1922. On one hand the people of India were brooding over the future of the *Swaraj* movement and on the other the British bureaucracy was tightening its grip over public affairs. It was, indeed, almost a clenched fist. What is more significant from our point of view, the efficacy of Satyagraha was seriously disputed. The radical youth groups and the labour parties were not convinced of the "compelling power" of non-violent direct action. Leaders of public opinion and philosophers began to discover, one by one, many loopholes in the ideology of Satyagraha. It aroused widespread academic interest and discussion. Books were published either defending or denouncing Satyagraha and *Gandhism* in general. Gandhi contended that the failure was due to the inadequate "preparedness" on the part of the people but after his release from jail he kept silent and retired to his *Ashrama*. This period of reflection and uncertainty however, brought to the people a greater realization of the implications of Satyagraha and of its various potentialities.

The period of demoralization over, new organization and new trends began to revive the spirits of the people

Inspired by the Soviet *Five-Year Plan*, the urban workers were waiting for a Messiah from the steppes. The All-India Trade Union Congress, founded in 1921, was a powerful group by this time. On the farmers' front, the National Congress party was making a heroic effort to expand its activities and to seek recruits by the thousands from among agriculturists.

The labour movement came to a head in 1929. Strikes occurred all over India. The Bombay Textile Labour Union was the first. A general strike of the jute workers followed in Bengal. The Iron Works at Jamshedpur, one of the largest in the world, was the next to be threatened by a labour war. The Iron Plate Works in the same industrial town, connected with the Burma Oil Company, succeeded in suppressing the walkout before it reached large proportions. The labour movement was becoming *class conscious* for the first time in India's short industrial history.

Meanwhile, the struggle on the nationalist front was reaching its climax. There were local Satyagrahas in the farming districts of Gujarat and Maharashtra. The conspicuous success of the Bardoli Satyagraha of 1928, already described in the previous chapter, infused new hope in the people and revived a general confidence in Gandhi's method. The absence of any Indian representative on the Simon Commission¹ drew the "Liberal" and the "Moderate" elements to the Congress fold. Thus the nation was again all energy and enthusiasm.

About this time, a new element was gaining in importance in the Indian political mosaic. The youth of India was demanding a hearing. Their organizations spread like wildfire, and by 1928, there was hardly a town of any size in India without its unit of politically-minded young men. These societies were sincerely radi-

¹ Composed of Englishmen only and presided over by Sir John Simon, this commission was appointed by the British Parliament to recommend constitutional changes in the Government of India.

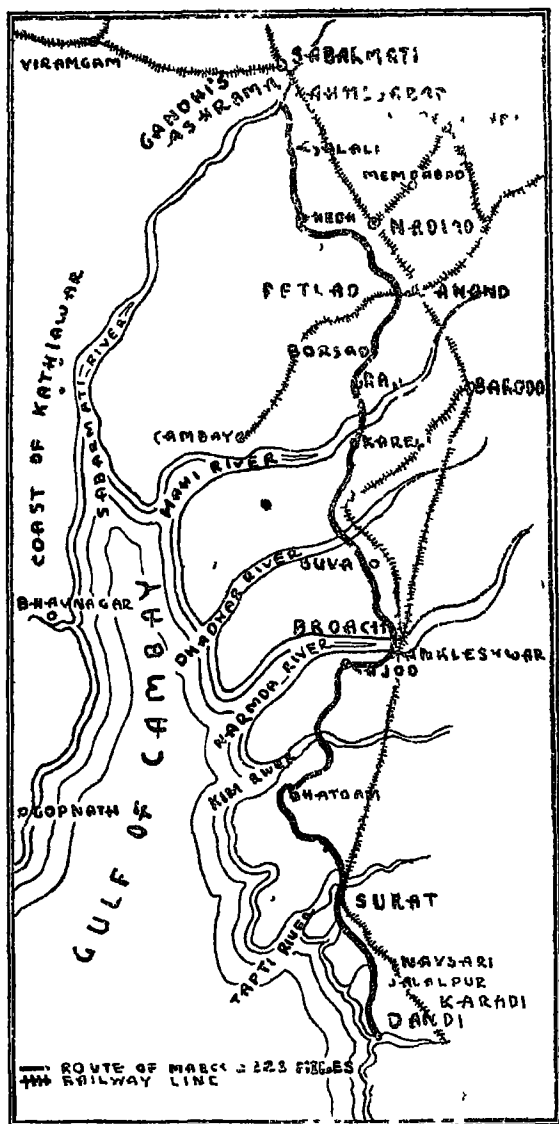
cal. Their guiding spirits were nationalists with overtones of Socialism. They advocated that either Gandhi launch the nation once more in direct action or give up his leadership.

With the intuition of a born leader, Gandhi felt that the time was ripe for direct action against the British government of India. The situation called for a strong Congress president who could swing the youth leagues and the workers behind that body. Gandhi's choice was Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.¹ One year previously, the Indian National Congress in its annual meeting at Calcutta had given an ultimatum to the government to confer Dominion Status in twelve months' time. The government failed to comply. Thereupon, in 1930, under the younger man's inspiration, India declared her independence on the memorable 26th of January. It was again a revolution, albeit non-violent; the community was rising against the state.

To fulfil its new goal, viz., Complete Independence, the Congress Executive authorized civil disobedience. It also appointed Gandhi as the nation's "Dictator." Upon Gandhi's arrest, it was decided that Pandit Nehru was to occupy the vacated position. A list of Dictators was prepared but kept secret. The struggle, however, was not to start until Gandhi published his detailed plan of attack and gave a signal.

When the plans were ready and the scene set, it was announced to the waiting nation that civil disobedience would be inaugurated on March 12, 1930. Ten days prior to this scheduled date, however, Gandhi, conforming to the pattern of Satyagraha, had sent the *Ultimatum* to the Viceroy and requested a prompt answer. The people were advised accordingly to maintain a state of non-committal "preparedness" pending the response of the government to Gandhi's final challenge. In this

¹ A Socialist at heart, Pandit Nehru is looked upon by his countrymen as the heir to the Mahatma's mantle.



MAP SHOWING THE COURSE OF THE MARCH
TO THE SEA

communication were listed the minimum demands of the Congress to be fulfilled in a maximum period of time.

The Viceroy's answer was unsatisfactory. Now it was incumbent upon the Satyagrahis to acquire by direct action what they failed to secure through parliamentary procedure. Taking up the challenge, Gandhi started on his famous *March to the Sea* with a handful of his nearest and dearest.¹ Upon arrival at Port Dandi, Gandhi and his "first batch" violated the Salt Act by preparing salt from the sea water. That was the signal the country awaited. The very next day witnessed India's transformation into one vast battlefield. The community and the state at last openly faced each other as enemies and in the following months, laws were regularly broken by the citizenry and punishment was meted out by the state.

The Satyagrahis attacked on many fronts and employed a variety of tactics. In big cities, they organized and led huge processions in defiance of police orders and prohibitory notices served by the warrant officers. In village and town alike, public meetings and conferences of local leaders were held in spite of the government ban. The usual boycott of British goods coupled with intensive picketing by women became general. Pickets were posted even at the gates of British banks, insurance companies, mints and bullion exchanges. As the press was now forbidden by the authorities to print campaign notices and news regarding government repression, the Satyagrahis issued their own bulletins and leaflets. Although these were regarded as illegal and revolutionary, they were freely distributed among the masses. Even more serious was the work of printing and selling proscribed literature. Stuccoed walls and sometimes the paved streets served as a bulletin board. Foreign correspondents never

¹ See the map showing the course of the March to the Sea on previous page.

failed to marvel at the spectacle of the sympathetic pedestrians carefully picking their way around the elaborate Congress announcements chalked on the sidewalks.

When the movement gathered momentum, certain more drastic stratagems were included in the general programme. A boycott was called on all state-owned post offices, telegraph systems, trams and ship lines. Public saluting of the National Flag, instead of the Union Jack, and displaying the National Flag on public buildings as well as over civil and criminal courts was another manoeuvre employed by the civil resisters in order to provoke further government friction. Non-violent volunteers were wont to refuse to make parole rounds to the police, and others defied restraint orders served on them by the courts. Attempts were made to re-occupy Congress offices which had been seized by the police.

Civil disobedience of unjust laws, however, was the principal feature of the strategy. The Salt Act was taken as the symbol of British exploitation of the masses and made a test case. The most formidable forces, therefore, were arrayed against the government monopoly of salt manufacture. In the wake of the violation of the Salt Act followed a redoubtable attack on the Forest Laws. And then came a general attack on as many obnoxious statutes of the state as were found vulnerable. Picketing of liquor and opium shops ate an alarming hole in the government earnings. Finally, the city-dwelling businessmen and manufacturers were called upon, to withhold certain taxes, and village farmers were asked not to pay land revenue.

Meanwhile, the bureaucracy had set free all the repressive and coercive powers at its command. First, the ranking leaders were rounded up and imprisoned. All Congress offices were decreed illegal and confiscated. However, new leaders sprang from the people, and more offices were opened in outlying areas. Then followed wholesale arrests of groups and volunteer corps. When the jails and improvised "detention camps" were filled to capacity,

baton charges on peaceful pickets and processions became the order of the day. Women Satyagrahis were insulted and ill-treated. Prisoners were subject to inhuman cruelties in the jails. Next on the programme of suppression was the confiscation of the Satyagrahis' property. Finally, firing on unarmed crowds became a common spectacle.

The toll of suffering was tremendous. According to nationalist sources, during the one year of non-violent direct action (from March 12, 1930, when Satyagraha was inaugurated, to March 5, 1931, when the truce was signed), 100,000 Indians cheerfully forfeited their liberty to enter His Majesty's numerous prisons, detention camps and improvised jails. A modest estimate shows that no less than 17,000 women also underwent various terms of imprisonment.¹ A score of them were expectant mothers when they found themselves behind prison bars. Consequently, these "war babies" of India were born in prison.

The number of the "lathi charges" mounted somewhere in the hundreds, and unarmed crowds were fired on without warning. Thousands were wounded and hundreds killed. Despite this "reign of terror," the people of India displayed a remarkable degree of restraint and non-violent discipline. What is more important, slaughter and mutilation failed to repress the movement or intimidate the people. On the contrary, it exhausted the government itself. The coercive arms of the state were paralyzed by the Satyagrahic tactics of the opponents. After a full year of struggle, the government gave in and began negotiations with the Congress high command. Gandhi and the members of the Working Committee of the Congress were released from jail and the former was invited to Delhi.

For the first time in history, on March 5, 1931, the representative of His Majesty signed a truce treaty with Gandhi, the erstwhile "rebel." Satyagraha on a national scale had

¹ Figures as quoted in *Condition of India, being a report of the Delegation sent by the India League in 1932*, London, 1934. The government has generally evaded stating exact figures concerning its repressive measures. Whenever stated, however, these figures fall far short of the nationalist estimates.

now come to a successful ending. The main demands of the people were granted in the treaty thereafter known as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact," and the stage was set for further negotiation with a view to evolving a free India. Gandhi was invited to London for the Round Table Conference.

Now that Gandhi was in London and the other leaders inactive, with the "non-violent army" disbanded and agitation discontinued, now that people were rejoicing in their triumph and consequently were off guard—the government broke its promises. So when Gandhi landed in Bombay, he found his pact with Irwin, now Lord Halifax, violated by the government. He also discovered that the bureaucracy was in a belligerent mood and did not mean to carry out the terms of the treaty. Thereupon, Gandhi was forced to revive Satyagraha. The renewed movement, however, died a natural death in 1934. Meanwhile, the new constitution, a substantial if unsatisfactory result of the nationalist struggle, was completed. Later it became the law of the land.

Thus the second nation-wide attempt at securing complete independence was, at best, a partial success. The movement, however, further prepared the country in the art of government and made the people confident of their strength and ability. According to all observers, foreign as well as domestic, it was a reborn India at the conclusion of the Civil Disobedience Movement. This angle has a great bearing on our special interest here, the fact that Satyagraha was proven to be an effective instrument of achieving political ends even when employed on a nation-wide scale. For the actual Satyagrahic engagement of the opponent culminated in the triumph of the nationalists as epitomized in the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact." The subsequent violation of the truce treaty by the Britons can in no way be regarded as a weakness or a failure of Satyagraha as such. It might have, at the most, exposed a flagrant lack of statesmanship in the nationalist high command.¹

¹ The magnitude of the success of the 1930-1934 Satyagraha, however, cannot be grasped without considering the present political situation in India.

Triumphant in a conflict between the community and the state, and between groups, Satyagraha has given evidence of being an effective mode of revolution or civil war. The Indian movement had even greater implications. It was not merely a struggle between the community on one hand and the state on the other, but it was also a conflict between a people and an alien government. To be sure, the British bureaucrats and the army in India had the might of England and her Dominions behind them. It cannot be denied that this power was utilized in the attempt to stamp out the nationalist uprising. Thus the Indian struggle had many characteristics of a conflict between two nations; it was waged, in a way, on an international scale. When viewed in that light, the success of the 1930 Satyagraha indicates that non-violent direct action might prove to be an effective means of settling a conflict involving even different states. There has been, moreover, one instant in Europe of the use of the non-violent method in a conflict between two governments. The struggle took place between Norway and Sweden in the early part of the nineteenth century. The Treaty of Kiel, concluded in 1814, stipulated that Norway should be ceded to the kingdom of Sweden. In order to effect this part of the treaty, Bernadotte invaded Norway. Surprisingly enough, no resistance was forthcoming. So after weeks of military inactivity, Bernadotte indicated that he was ready to enter negotiations. Unity of the two countries was the result. Even when, after a century of partnership, the Norwegians decided by a majority vote to secede from Sweden and become independent, the latter accepted the decision without bloodshed. The unsullied record of peaceful accord between the two countries is still the envy of other nations.

The nationalists have now complete control over seven out of the eleven great Provinces of India, with partial control over two more Provinces under coalition ministries. Even in the remaining two Provinces, the National Congress party has single largest groups in the legislatures. Thus the Satyagrahi "ex-convicts" are today Premiers and Ministers in India's several Provinces.

CHAPTER V

ORGANIZATION AND DISCIPLINE

THE SUCCESSES OF Satyagraha, particularly those with a national bearing, have come not merely from the employment of a novel and surprising strategy, but they are made possible also by the existence in India of a lusty organization to back and to conduct the actual operations of non-violent direct action. In fact, no technique of mass mobilization, however sound and logically tenable, can ever achieve anything worth while without being utilized in an organized manner and without being checked and controlled by strict discipline. How much more should such be the case of Satyagraha which aspires to be an equivalent of war, an institution operative both during peaceful periods and when force is matched with force. It is essential, therefore, to look into the organizational set-up of the *Swaraj* movement in India.

I. THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Indian National Congress, whose banners herald Complete Independence for India's millions, is a country-wide organization counting millions in its membership. Aimed directly at *Purna Swaraj* (complete independence), it is founded on the theory of non-violence; Satyagraha and Satyagraha alone is its creed of action. The Congress cuts across the distinctions of colour, caste and creed. It is even above class stratification. Consequently it gives entrée to the purest Brahmin priest and lowliest untouchable. Hindus, Mohammedans, Christians, Sikhs, Buddhists,

Jainas, Parsees and even the aboriginal Bhils find a mutual bond in the National Congress. The industrial magnates of Bombay and Calcutta sit cheek by jowl with dispossessed Indian villagers at each annual session.

The National Congress is by far the strongest and best-organized party in the body politic of India. Established in 1885, it is the oldest non-governmental political organization in India. Mild and loyal at its inception, its original platform was to obtain Dominion Status within the British Commonwealth through "legitimate" activities. In retrospect, the birth of the Congress presents an almost comic picture. A few exceedingly prosperous and urbane Indians, with Oxford and Cambridge backgrounds together with British tastes in dress, food and accents, gathered together once a year for three days in an outstanding Indian city. Humorists have said that these men pleaded the case of India-made goods while ramming their hands in the pockets of their own Bond Street suits. Over and above the speeches, however, these meetings resulted in several petitions to the Viceroy. At best it was a very small, select group, and the overwhelming illiterate peasantry did not know that the organization existed. Now and then some great leader—such as Pal of Bengal, Lal of the Punjab, or Bal of Maharashtra—made his appearance at one of the meetings, but according to the records neither the ardent, un-westernized guest speakers nor their audience ever really saw eye to eye.

However, from its earliest days, the National Congress was a thorn in the flesh of the British bureaucracy. Shrewd statesmen that they have always been, the ruling class of Britons interpreted the nascent Congress as a threat to their supremacy. Their reaction was typically British—first they ignored the new development, then they tried to smother it under the propitiating burden of petty favours; and finally they expressed official hostility to every activity of the Congress. But the organization, growing in the meantime by leaps and bounds, could

not be aborted, for intricate, historical forces had continued to make it the mouthpiece of malcontents of every complexion and variety.

"Confused" and "cautious" would most accurately describe India's national temperament in the year 1914. It was no secret that the country's need for an All-India leader and a practical programme of action had not as yet been satisfied. India was quiescent, but anxious, and it was at this psychological moment that a certain bright-eyed little lawyer returned from South Africa for a visit to his Motherland. Reports of his homecoming were received with enthusiasm by India's more youthful patriots because they had admired his brilliant legal championship of the unfortunate Indians of South Africa, and his handling of a novel means of defence, Satyagraha. The intelligentsia was half amused and half on the *qui vive*. The illiterate Indian villagers were just plain curious, for they had heard that Gandhi, a *Banya*, was a man of God, living a life of simplicity and suffering. So when Gandhi returned, India was subconsciously awaiting a man of his stature.

Gandhi did not join the Congress outright. Instead, he engaged in a Satyagraha movement in Champaran, already described, and succeeded in wresting agrarian reforms from Champaran landlords and the British government which protected them. This *coup* made the Congress leaders desperately anxious to have Gandhi's guidance. They asked him humbly to take the job and Gandhi accepted. Then things began to happen. Inside of a few months after Gandhi took the helm of the Congress, it was a revolutionized organization. From a mouthpiece of the well-to-do bourgeoisie, it became an organization of the people.

At first Gandhi sanctioned the "old" Congress's dream of obtaining Dominion Status by *legitimate means*. But when he saw that Dominion Status was not coming through "legitimate" means, he prevailed upon his colleagues to alter the phrasing to *peaceful and legitimate*

means. As a second step, with the consent of the Congress, he eliminated the word "legitimate." And before Gandhi had finished whipping up the Constitution, its basis was simply *non-violence*. The goal of Congress activity, likewise, was raised from Dominion Status to Complete Independence.

Gandhi's next effort was directed toward renovating the Congress set-up. To him, Congress was not merely an organization, but also a convenient vehicle for his prized Satyagraha, or non-violent direct action. As no social movement can exist without the support of the masses, Gandhi and his committees started to systematically comb the country looking for possible converts. As a consequence, the new nationalism was carried up and down India's vast *no man's land*, the villages. English gave way to Hindustani as a means of Congressional expression, so that even the peasants could understand their leaders. The membership fee was reduced so drastically that the poor had as much opportunity to join as the rich. "Any Indian adult," writes Gandhi, "male or female above the age of eighteen years can become a member of the Congress organization by signing its creed and by paying four *annas* (about a dime) per year, or by spinning 2,000 yards of yarn out of cotton supplied by a Congress committee. Thus there is practically adult suffrage."¹ With membership dues as modest as four *annas*, the villagers for the first time found it possible to join the Congress *en masse*. What is more, by this time, it would have been difficult to keep them out, for they were wholly won over by the inducements offered by this Congress which spoke Hindustani and not the alien *Angrezy*.

Congress offices were established in as many villages as the leaders could manage. The shrewd eyes of Gandhi had noticed that there are over 700,000 villages in India, and about two-thirds of them are in territory directly ruled by the British. Seventy-one per cent of the population, roughly 224,000,000 Indians, live in these little settle-

¹ *India and the National Congress*, London, 1931.

ments. In order to make Satyagraha a mass movement, the Congress had to rely heavily upon the loyalty of rural India. It would be difficult to estimate the exact number of villages that have a Congress office to-day, but the wholehearted response which Gandhi's call in 1930 received from these areas, indicates that one hamlet out of three is thoroughly indoctrinated in the credo of Satyagraha and has a Congress office of its own.¹ During times of peace, this village unit is busy with the "constructive programme" of the Congress as formulated by Gandhi. Over and above corraling new converts to the cause, the village unit seeks to control and direct the civic life of the community, thereby replacing the government functionaries. It distributes Satyagraha's free literature, and has among its personnel men and women who can spread Congress propaganda with oratory and songs. Village leaders give night courses in village economy with emphasis on the fact that an increase in local products would be a telling blow to British commercial interests. Besides these general activities, the Village Congress Office directs:

1. the propagation of hand spinning,
2. a campaign against drugs and intoxicants,
3. the propagation of Hindustani as the *Lingua Franca* of India,
4. the elimination of untouchability,
5. welfare activities such as relief and reconstruction, and
6. Hindu-Mohammedan unity.

When on a war footing, that is, when a call for civil disobedience or non-co-operation has been received from the Congress high command, the village organization

¹ Sir Samuel Hoare declared in the House of Commons during the hectic days of 1930, that only one village out of ten had taken to civil disobedience. Even at that, Sir Samuel's "official version" concedes the Congress some 50,000 villages, and over five million rural Indians.

rallies the community against paying its land revenue or similar taxes, and advises the villagers when they come to the point of breaking laws and boycotting government functionaries. The resignation of the *Mukhi* (the governmental representative who collects the taxes) has often been effected by village party workers, and when the *Mukhi* resigns, the only tie binding the village to the British *Raj* at Delhi is broken.

The village unit regularly sends a representative to the *Taluka* Congress office, a convention of leaders from several neighbouring communities. The *Taluka* Congress, in turn, sends representatives to the District Committee. Three or four District Committees are organized under a Provincial Congress Committee. By and large, the expenses are borne locally, so that the community may regard the organization as its own. The Provincial Congress Committee sends several delegates to the annual plenary session of the Indian National Congress. This annual get-together is the highest policy-making body, and even the recommendations of the high command have to be ratified—or acclaimed, as it happens sometimes—by the 6,000 delegates chosen by the vote of the people.

Until 1935, the annual session of the Congress took place, as a general rule, in one of India's larger cities. Gandhi, however, saw an opportunity to quicken the brotherhood between his city followers and his country disciples by making the more cosmopolitan delegates go back to the land. As a result, the last four assemblies have been held amid rural surroundings. Since the convention is attended by more than a million spectators, the selected village becomes overnight a fantastic *pot-pourri*. When the delegates are in a lighter mood, there are pageants, rallies, and dinners of high propagandic content. Several sympathetic organizations also hold meetings during these four days in order to capture some of the political lions who are concentrated at the convention.

A million Indians register at the assembly, but only

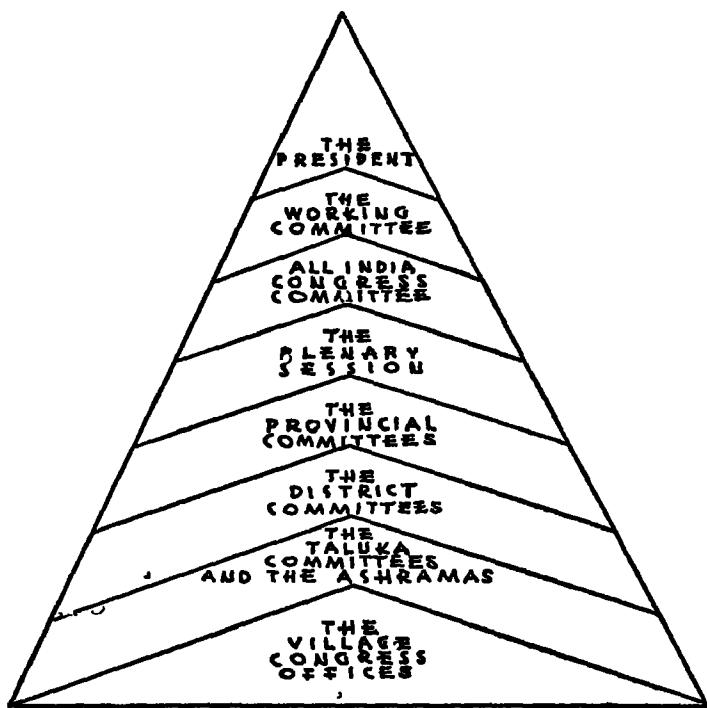


DIAGRAM OF THE CONGRESS ORGANIZATION

six thousand delegates can shape the organization's policies during the ensuing year and vote on its resolutions. From them an *All-India Congress Committee* of 350 men and women is elected. From this group, in turn, is elected the *Working Committee* of the Congress, comprising fifteen members, to carry on the programme throughout the year. The *Working Committee*, similar in function to the British or American Cabinet, is out-ranked in power only by the Congress President. Elected every year, the Congress President stands at the apex of this pyramid whose base, as we have seen, is sunk deep in rural India. There is also a permanent secretariat of the Congress at *Swaraj Bhavan*, Allahabad, to maintain the continuity of the work.

During peacetime it is the duty of the President (*Rastrapati*=Ruler of the Nation) and the *Working Committee* to carry out the dictates of the plenary session, and to set in action the "constructive programme" drawn up at the convention. They are organizers and disciplinarians, covering the country in preparation for the emergencies of Satyagraha.

On a wartime basis, that is, when the Congress resorts to direct action, the President becomes a *dictator*,¹ and names a man who must take his place should the acting President be imprisoned. Sometimes a list of succession is prepared which will replace any loss in high command. Wartime authority is vested in men who hold key positions, and in "war councils" which replace village units.²

2. THE HINDUSTANI SEVADAL

The Congress organization is supplemented by a permanent corps of *Swayamsevakas*, or volunteers. *Hin-*

¹ Although Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru was the Congress President in 1930, it was Gandhi who was made the first dictator. After all, Gandhi, the inventor of the new weapon of Satyagraha, was the only man at first who understood his invention, and the only one who could put it into practical use. The Pandit was the next dictator.

² See the diagram of the organization on the next page.

dustani Sevadal (The Corps of Servants of India) is a modern innovation, but it has been an inestimably important factor in the successful campaigns of recent years. These volunteers, steeped in non-violence, are experts in Satyagrahic strategy and discipline. In times of direct action, they are assigned the job of shaping and disciplining that horde of raw, adventurous recruits who form the bulk of any mass movement. The *Sevadal* has thus supplied what is known in military language as commissioned officers.

The *Sevadal's* village units and provincial headquarters, kept up by funds from the central treasury, are hand in glove with Congress agencies operating in the same territory, but the training corps has definitely its own separate work to do. During the summer holidays training camps are maintained for a month or six weeks at a time. To these camps come the pick of the village at the expense of the organization. Naturally they are expected to return to their communities fully equipped to teach their sector of society what they have learned at the camp. During peace, they lend a hand to the "constructive programme." Upon the pronouncement of direct action these reserves have but one step up to reach leadership.

Thus the *Sevadal* is a sort of standing army of the Congress. Being non-violent resisters, they are more like the "army against Nature" proposed long ago by William James in his *Moral Equivalent of War*. To draw a contemporary analogy, they resemble the CCC of the New Deal. Unobtrusively useful during times of peace, they are prepared for a crisis.

The general discipline of the volunteer officers as well as of the rank and file of recruits during a campaign of non-violent direct action is governed by the credo of non-violence. Gandhi, in order to avoid any misunderstanding on this point, and after being empowered to do so by a resolution of the Working Committee in February, 1930, postulated a set of rules governing the behaviour

of Satyagrahis, or civil resisters, in the *Young India* of February 27, 1930. Published on the eve of the Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, it was Gandhi's attempt to codify his conception of how the ideal Satyagrahi should behave. Instead of a summary, the author proposes to give the quotation in full in order to preserve the precision and clear-cut simplicity of Gandhi's fifteen commandments.

AS AN INDIVIDUAL

1. A Satyagrahi, i.e., a civil resister, will harbour no anger.
2. He will suffer the anger of the opponent.
3. In doing so he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but he will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger.
4. When any person in authority seeks to arrest a civil resister, he will voluntarily submit to the arrest, and he will not resist the attachment or removal of his own property, if any, when it is sought to be confiscated by the authorities.
5. If a civil resister has any property in his possession as a trustee, he will refuse to surrender it, even though in defending it he might lose his life. He will, however, never retaliate.
6. Non-retaliation excludes swearing and cursing.
7. Therefore a civil resister will never insult his opponent, and therefore, also, he may not take part in many of the newly coined cries which are contrary to the spirit of *Ahimsa*.
8. A civil resister will not salute the Union Jack, nor will he insult it or officials, English or Indian.
9. In course of the struggle if one insults an official or commits an assault upon him, a civil resister will protect such official or officials from the insult or attack even at the risk of his life.

AS A PRISONER

10. As a prisoner, a civil resister will behave courteously toward prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as for instance, whilst he will *salaam* officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations and will refuse to shout Victory to *Sarkar* (government) or, the like. He will take cleanly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels.
11. A civil resister will make no distinction between an ordinary prisoner and himself, will in no way regard himself as superior to the rest; nor will he ask for any conveniences that may not be necessary for keeping his body in good health and condition. He is entitled to ask for such conveniences as may be required for his physical and spiritual well-being.
12. A civil resister may not fast for want of conveniences whose deprivation does not involve any injury to one's self-respect.

AS A UNIT

13. A civil resister will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not.
14. He will carry out orders in the first instance even though they appear to him to be insulting, inimical or foolish, and then appeal to higher authority. He is free to determine the fitness of the corps to satisfy him before joining it; but after he has joined it, it becomes his duty to submit to its discipline,

- irksome or otherwise. If the sum total of the energy for the corps appears to a member to be improper or immoral, he has a right to sever his connection; but, being within it, he has no right to commit a breach of its discipline.
15. No civil resister is to expect maintenance for his dependants. It would be an accident if any such provision is made. A civil resister entrusts his dependants to the care of God. Even in ordinary warfare wherein hundreds of thousands give themselves up to it, they are able to make no previous provision. How much more, then, should such be the case in Satyagraha? It is the universal experience that in such times hardly anybody is left to starve.

3. THE ALL-INDIA SPINNERS' ASSOCIATION

The economic programme of the Congress movement is supervised by the All-India Spinners' Association. More recently, the All-India Cottage Industry Association, under the direct guidance of Gandhi, has expanded the activities of the former organization to more and diverse fields relating to rural India. Although authorized by a Congress resolution and indirectly connected with the nationalist movement, these organizations are run by independent trust companies and corporations having funds and machinery of their own. Since the government regards the National Congress as a revolutionary group and has time and again declared it illegal, all organizations too closely bound up in the Congress are liable to meet the same opposition and suffer confiscation of their property. Consequently, Gandhi has urged the All-India Spinners' Association to refrain from political activities and to make its speciality the advancement of the economic programme of the Congress party.

The All-India Spinners' Association has assets amounting to about 28 *lacs of rupees*, about £1,000,000, in U.S. currency, which is a lot of money in India, and in hundreds of towns throughout India the organization maintains wholesale houses where *Khadi* (handmade "Gandhi-cloth") as well as other articles of indigenous manufacture are stored and sold. Indian farmers, after the fertile four-month monsoon season, are idle for eight months of the year, and it is with their leisure time that the Association is chiefly concerned. To forestall their, entering city factories during this lay-off, the nationalist enterprise supplies the ploughman and his wife with cotton, spinning wheel, weaving loom and other tools native to the cotton industry. The finished products are collected by workers in the All-India Spinners' Association, and the agriculturalist is paid according to the current standard of wages. The goods are collected at the provincial headquarters, classified, and then sent to the warehouses to be marketed. A portion of the cotton material, however, is retained by the villagers for their own clothing upon payment of the barest fraction of its price.

The results of this movement are twofold. On the one hand, it strikes a telling blow at the commercial interests of Great Britain, especially the cotton industry, which ranks the rural Indian as its best customer. On the other hand, it deposits a few cents in the coffers of men and women whose fortunes are ordinarily decided by the caprices of Nature. To a class with an average monthly income of less than \$3.60, the addition of a single *rupee* can spell financial security. According to the Association's report, in 1930 it provided work for more than 200,000 spinners and weavers. Their aggregate income was about 23 *lacs of rupees*, which means that part-time occupation in the home brought the villager an average income of 12 *rupees* per annum—about an eighth of the average yearly income per head in India.

Besides maintaining the wholesale houses or "depots," the All-India Spinners' Association has established settlements where weaving is taught. These centres are beehives of activity. Here research workers experiment on spinning equipment for cottage use, bleaching and dying formulae are tested, and printing presses hum. The Association's trade journal, printed in three different languages, is a painstakingly accurate barometer of market conditions. More than 7,000 villages were covered by the Association in 1930. In short, the All-India Spinners' Association is an All-India relief agency for thousands upon thousands of the country's semi-starved 'villagers. The Spinners' Association's relief, however, is well earned and none who receives it can be lazy.

The farmers, in turn, are not slow to recognize that the improvement in their living conditions has been made possible by Mahatma Gandhi and the activities of the Congress. When literature and information regarding the nationalist activities are supplied by the Association's "depots" and wandering scouts, they are eagerly received. And, finally, when a call comes from the Congress, the agriculturalists swell the ranks of the civil resisters as does almost no other class.

4. THE ASHRAMAS

Another very important non-political activity of the National Congress is its programme of national education. Contending that the government-subsidized schools and colleges kill the spirit of the students and make mere clerks out of them, the Non-co-operation Movement of 1921 challenged young men and women to come out of their classes. To provide training for these striking students, *Vidyapiths*, national colleges and universities, schools and *Ashramas* were started all over India. These institutions vary in character, but all of them give courses in village service and rural reconstruction. Otherwise

the curriculum in most cases does not differ greatly from the government's educational system. The fundamental difference is in attitude. The teachers in the national schools do not discourage their charges from believing that "India is for the Indians."

The *Ashramas*—centres of social service—specialize in the training of "Gandhi workers" who can be sent to the villages to carry on the economic, sanitary, and political work of the nationalist movement. The students are almost cloistered in the *Ashramas* except when they go out on field work which often covers hundreds of nearby villages. The workers and their apprentices lead very simple lives in order to qualify themselves for the service of the poor. Their activities vary from place to place, but the following list is typical:

1. They supplement the work of the All-India Spinners' Association by popularizing hand spinning and weaving; they also teach other cottage industries and sing the praises of handmade goods.
2. *Ashrama* physicians give medical relief.
3. *Ashrama* instructors conduct night schools for the poor of all ages who struggle for a living by day.
4. *Ashrama* workers organize and advise co-operative societies.
5. They spread hygienic and health propaganda among the people; they even go so far as to clean the village streets and wells and ponds.
6. The *Ashrama's* book collectors give their books as the foundations of free libraries.
7. Workers with law degrees help the farmers form their own *Panchayats* (Village-Five) for the settlement of disputes and for the civic organization of the community; in this way poor litigants are spared the draining of resources which a hearing in a government court would entail.
8. Once a year the *Ashramas* organize educational

- and agricultural exhibits for those who cannot read.
9. They spread scientific knowledge regarding dairy farming.
 10. Every man and woman in the *Ashrama* has all the arguments against child-marriage and untouchability at the tip of his tongue, and day in and day out the Gandhi-workers urge the villagers to give up child-marriage and untouchability, as well as the tradition of having lavishly extravagant marriage and death rites.

The *Ashramas*, then, become the nuclei of the economic and spiritual regeneration of India's countryside. The Congress's seed does not fall on barren ground, for the villagers are both tractable and responsive. Once fixed, their loyalty to the nationalist movement and Mahatma Gandhi can never be shaken. When the call comes for direct action against the government, they put their heart and soul into Congress activity. The *Ashramas*, at these times, are transformed into Satyagrahis' camps where the energy of the people is checked and guided into non-violent channels.

Part III

THE THEORY OF 'SATYAGRAHA

CHAPTER VI

THE FOLKLORE OF NON-VIOLENCE

THE PRIMEVAL RUDIMENTS of Gandhi's Satyagraha or non-violent direct action were latent in the Indo-Aryans' ancient practice of sacrifice. Coming through the defiles of the Hindu Kush ranges, now known as the Khyber and Bolan Passes, the sturdy invaders settled down along the fertile banks of the Indus under the shadows of the Himalayas. It is a moot question whether the first Aryans to enter India came about 4500 B.C., but it is virtually an established fact that they came earlier than fifteen centuries before Christ, that is, in the *Vedic period* of India's history. They brought with them from their original home certain notions and beliefs which they further developed on Indian soil during their southeast march along the Mother *Ganga*.

One of these notions, one very near the heart of the folkways and mores of the early Aryans, was that of sacrifice. By offering corn, animal life, or human life to their gods, the Aryans expected the gods to return the compliment with happiness on earth and bliss in heaven. Thus the rustic practice of sacrifice that the Aryans brought to India was a pure form of propitiation. During their steady trek into India, however, the new environment, especially perhaps the unflagging fertility of the Indian soil, wrought fundamental changes in their notions and behaviour patterns. The practice of sacrifice became an institution in itself with its mass of formalized rites and rituals. From a gesture of propitiation it became a law which worked automatically to procure desired

ends or to eliminate evil, and herein lies, the writer feels, the origin of Satyagraha. It is at this stage, too, that the core of Hinduism (which is a culture rather than a religion) was formed.

At a much later stage, the practice of sacrifice was refined into the theory of self-sacrifice and suffering, which, in its turn, crystallized into the positive doctrine of *Ahimsa*, or non-injury. It cannot be overemphasized that the history of Indian culture is the history of the growth of the idea of *Ahimsa*. Naturally there have been wars in the course of India's history, but they have been few when compared to the histories of other nations of analogous magnitude and equipment. India has, furthermore, never sent her armies to conquer other countries. And in India itself, fighting was restricted to *Kshatriyas* alone, leaving the bulk of the castes to peaceful pursuits. Gandhi's modern doctrine of Satyagraha, too, is the practical expansion of *Ahimsa*. More than mere expansion, Gandhi's version is the culmination of India's heritage. Mahatma Gandhi, the author of Satyagraha, is above all else a Hindu. In spite of the fact that he has studied in the West and is quite familiar with Christianity, Islam, and Zoroastrianism, the main source of Gandhi's inspiration has always been Hinduism. He has frequently expressed himself to that effect in his autobiography. The Indian people, co-partners with Gandhi in Satyagraha have this three-thousand-year-old doctrine of *Ahimsa* as their background.

Therefore, in tracing the origin and growth of the ideology, one cannot possibly disregard the most outstanding and conspicuous footprints—such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Jainism, Buddhism, Asokanism, and medieval mysticism of India—left by the onward march of Indian culture. There is one more direction from which Gandhi in his early life received an impetus for the formation of his doctrine, namely, The Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament. Of the moderns, Count Leo Tolstoy

made a profound impression. The fine hand of Henry Thoreau is also discernible in the ideology of Civil Disobedience. An attempt will be made further on in this chapter to piece out the origin and growth of Satyagraha as affected by the Indo-Aryan practice of sacrifice, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the Jeena, the Buddha, Asoka, Christ, Tolstoy, and Thoreau. A brief biographical sketch of M. K. Gandhi, the latest of the contributors to the doctrine of Satyagraha, will be given at the end of the chapter.

I. THE VEDAS

The practice of the Aryans of offering to a god some sacrifice that might propitiate him and cause him to send good fortune on earth and in heaven is pre-Indian, and it underwent its first Indianization around two millennia before Christ. In its oriented form sacrifice constitutes the keynote of the Vedas, "the earliest documents of the human mind that we possess." Elaborate systems of *Yajna* (sacrifice) and their accompanying complex formulae appear to have been evolved before the fifteenth century, preceding the birth of Christ—the accepted date of the compilations of the four Vedas. The text of the Vedas is the mirrored reflection of that period of intellectual activity when the Aryans threaded their way toward the heart of India and became the Indo-Aryans.

The Vedic *Yajna*, or sacrifice, was surrounded by complex ritualism. The most minute detail, such as the shape of the sacrificial fire and the aroma of the sacrifice, along with delicate shadings in the intonations of the chants, were prescribed and imperative. When performed with the most painstaking exactitude, the sacrifice was credited with having peculiar magical properties by which the performers attained their specific ends. Generally such ends included a shower of rain when the community was parched, or the birth of a son when the king had no heir, or the routing of an invading army.

One result of this growing faith in the efficacy of *Rajna* was that the gods, with their likes and dislikes, were relegated to a comparatively unimportant position. On the other hand, it raised the dignity of sacrifice and made it a self-sufficient natural law which, standing alone, could bestow the desired favours. "This idea of sacrifice is entirely different from anything found in the other races, for to the Vedic people the sacrifices were more powerful than the gods, who might be pleased or displeased, but if the sacrifices were duly performed, the prayers were bound to be fulfilled."¹

Underlying this conception of sacrifice was the common-sense notion that by relinquishing to God the persons, animals, or things that are dear to himself, the votary undergoes suffering and, thereby, gains God's favour. "For the depths of one's affection for God consists in the surrender of one's property and possessions to Him."² The far-reaching assumption involved here is that suffering, self-imposed and borne in the spirit of sacrifice, is the most potent of appeals; that even the most whimsical of gods cannot resist the power of suffering. Born of sacrifice, suffering is the human power which produces desired ends and defeats evil.

Gandhi's contribution lies in the fact that he applied this potentiality of suffering born through sacrifice to the social polity. Down under all the complex and refined modern manifestations of the doctrine of non-violent direct action is the faith that desired ends may be attained through suffering, when it is voluntary and undertaken in the spirit of sacrifice. "The mother suffers," Gandhi writes, "so that her child may live. The condition of wheat-growing is that the seed grain should perish. Life comes out of death—. Progress is to be measured by the amount of suffering undergone by the sufferer. Hence did the sacrifice of Jesus suffice to free a sorrow-

¹ Dasgupta, Surendranath, *Indian Idealism*, Cambridge, 1933, p. 1.

² Radhakrishnan, S., *Indian Philosophy*, London, 1929, p. 107.

ing world.”¹ Thus the crude Indo-Aryan notion of sacrifice has been the basic cultural force in India throughout aeons of time until finally today it has reached its zenith in Gandhism. Between its original form of human and animal sacrifice and its contemporary manifestation in Satyagraha, it has undergone the intellectual refinement of the Upanishads and humanistic transfusions from Jainism and Buddhism. Asoka, whom H. G. Wells regards as the greatest emperor of all time,² made it the doctrine of his state, and countless mystics and saints who appeared from time to time in all parts of India, have taken pens in their frail, wasted hands in order to leave behind a eulogy to suffering. And now comes Gandhi, who stands at the peak of India’s cultural heritage and through him, it appears, India proposes to offer to the world what is best in her.

2. THE UPANISHADS

The simple religion of the Vedas was patterned around the act of sacrifice, and the vigorous hymns that form the text of the Vedas deal in some way or other with that performance. They reflect the mentality of a race which was warlike, sturdy and conquering. With the passing of years the Aryans, previously hard-pressed for food and shelter in their original home, found that the rich fruits of India fell easily into their hands. Their living was not so hard; they had at their disposal more than they could use. Consequently, they became sure of themselves, believing as they did that lavish reward was a sign that they had done the right thing. Gradually the element of personal pain began to disappear from their conception of sacrifice, and more rituals began to creep in. Soon the meaning was lost; only the forms survived.

By 1000 B.C. the formalistic impositions of the Vedas

¹ Gandhi, M. K., in *Young India*, June 16, 1920.

² Wells, H. G., *Outline of History*, New York, 1931, p. 404.

became too burdensome for its devotees. Thereupon the free-thinking philosophers of the period attacked the problem of salvaging community life from the stagnation of ritualism. As a result, spiritual meanings were infused into the empty structure of the *Yajna* forms. These efforts, which took place between 1000 B.C. and 300 B.C. are immortalized in the Upanishads.

While adhering to the forms of sacrifice, the Upanishads sought to refine them. They introduced new interpretations of sacrifice and dressed some of them in allegories. They shifted the burden of sacrifice to the subjective existence of the votary. They preached that all sacrifices are for the sake of realizing one's own self. *Life itself is sacrifice:*

"The true sacrifice is man; his first twenty-four years are his morning libation . . . in hunger, in thirst, in abstinence from pleasure standeth his consecration. . . . In his eating and drinking and his pleasures he keeps a holy festival, and in his laughter and feasting and marrying he sings hymns of praise. Self-discipline, generosity, straightforwardness, *Ahimsa* (non-injury to others) and truth in speech, these are his payments, and the bath of purification when the sacrifice is over is death."¹

The barbaric formalism of the Vedic sacrifice was thus given a new twist and, consequently, was humanized. By making the ego both the subject and object of sacrifice, the Upanishadic seers worked a revolutionary change upon its basic ideology. Until then the efficacy of sacrifice was conceived as emanating from a vague notion of suffering. The Upanishads constituted suffering, undergone in a spirit of sacrifice, as the main performance and relegated sacrificial ritualism to a secondary position. (The emphasis on "self," on the other hand, was the cue for the entrance of *Ahimsa*, or non-

¹ *Chandogya Upanishad*, iii.

injury, as the supreme cultural dynamic—but more of this later.) Thus it was suffering, willed and sacrificial, that emerged as human force out of the Upanishadic refinement of the original practice of sacrifice. From this point on, the idea of *Ahimsa*, which underlies and conditions Gandhi's Satyagraha, becomes a strong, brightly defined thread in the fibre of India's cultural history.

3. JAINISM

Although suffering supplanted sacrifice as the first prerequisite for earthly well-being and heavenly bliss, the forms of the Indo-Aryan *Yajna* survived. Slaves and animals were still being sacrificed. Even during the *Upanishadic period*, when the seers tried to substitute fruits and flowers and grains and *ghee* (heated butter) for men and animals, there were human sacrifices (*Naramedha Yajna*) and horse sacrifices (*Asvamedha Yajna*). The loss of one's slaves or cattle or harvest was held to be sufficient evidence of one's pain. The individual suffered losses, but his body was beyond the reach of the flames.

The sacrificial discipline of the Brahmins first met revolt during the *epic period* (600 B.C. to A.D. 200) of the Indo-Aryans in the form of Jainism. Prince Vardhamana, a Kshatriya by caste, led a spiritual reformation against the sacrificial religion of the Brahmins. He and his followers were presumably motivated by a strong aversion against taking human or animal life, and against a performance in which suffering was concentrated everywhere but in the performer. According to tradition, he was the second son of a Kshatriya chieftain in Magadha. He was born, it is believed, in 599 B.C., and he died in 527 B.C. Through self-training and self-discipline he won the title of the Jeena, The Victor, and became the last prophet of the Jainas. His whole ethico-philosophical religion can be summed up in a text which is the firm conviction of the Jainas, namely, "*Ahimsa*

(non-violence) is the greatest of all religions." Jainism is famous for its minute and subtle analysis of non-violent life, for its practical ethics in other words. The five great ethical principles around which the whole system is woven are as follows:

1. The Jaina shall not be violent, but shall be kind to all creation.
2. He shall not steal nor conduct himself dishonourably in everyday life.
3. The Jaina shall be charitable and truthful in his speech.
4. He shall be chaste in thought, word, and deed.
5. He shall renounce all worldly interests.

The doctrine of *Ahimsa*—non-injury in thought, word, or deed to any breathing thing—was invoked in order to raise a lasting barrier against slaughter in the name of sacrifice. This, however, did not eliminate the notion of suffering as a means to attain an end. What it did do was to transform suffering into suffering of the ego and it evolved an intricate system of self-negation. The passion for *Ahimsa* and self-suffering went to such extremes at a much later stage that the Jainas even tolerated masochism. The original response to the stimulation of Jainism, however, was the creation in the Indian mind of a deep faith in the efficacy of non-violent suffering, self-imposed, and borne personally. The thousands of legends in which Vardhamana, the Jeena, was the central figure, picture him as a conqueror by the sheer force of his non-violence.

The idea of non-violence took roots in Indian soil as a result of the teachings and life-example of the Jeena.

4. BUDDHISM

Sixteen years after the birth of Vardhamana, in 583 B.C., there was born in India another founder of a new

religion who also left his imprint upon the tortuous path that must eventually lead to Gandhism. His name, Gautama, became, after many trials, Buddha, or the Enlightened One. He was the crown prince of the Sakya kingdom of King Shuddhodana, and his mother's name was Maya. He, too, like Vardhamana, was a Kshatriya. From his spiritual experience, Buddha became convinced of the four noble truths: namely, (1) that there is suffering in the world, (2) that it has a cause, (3) that the cause can be eliminated and (4) that there is a way to do it.

The suffering in the world, and the violence of mankind, diagnosed Buddha, sprang from human "interest-ness" and greed. It cannot be defeated, this redeemer contended, by extreme actions. One has to avoid all excess and seek a middle path, the golden *via media*. Only love and compassion would emerge triumphant—love and compassion cleansed of all violence in thought, word and deed. Thus the Jeena's doctrine of *Ahimsa*, which lay latent in Vedic hymns and Upanishadic discourses, assumed a more positive form through the housecleaning given it by Buddha. And all the legends of Buddha's triumph over evil through sheer non-violence instilled once more in the Indian mind a fresh conviction in the efficacy of voluntary suffering. The *Jatakas* (stories of the Buddha's innumerable previous lives) also emphasized the power of non-violence.

5. ASOKA

So far the practice of non-violence was mainly a sacred, religious experience. Its good qualities were vaunted largely by saints and seers. When they applied the doctrine to their own lives, their eyes were turned toward the heavens. When the general practice of non-injury was adopted by the people, they, too, thought in terms of the hereafter. The mundane blessings which inadvertently

followed a suppliant's suffering were regarded as more or less the intervention of Providence.

Three hundred years before Christ, however, *Ahimsa* was deftly filtered of its more spiritual qualities. It was made a cultural dynamic which governed the day-to-day activities of the Indian people. What is more important, non-violence was made the doctrine of the state, and it even regulated the political activities of the government. The man who thwacked the breath of life into the doctrine of *Ahimsa* was not a saint nor a religious teacher. He was an emperor. The expressions he used were neither veiled nor scriptural, but were couched in the forthright language of the bazaar. The results he hoped to attain were for the benefit of men and women in this world. He sought as an emperor to solve the political and social problems of his realm without using physical coercion—through non-violence.

Asoka, the man who thus presaged Gandhi two millennia ago, ruled as much territory as the British hold today. Afghanistan was a part of his empire, and the Greek kings, such as Antiochus Theos of Syria and Western Asia, Ptolemy Philadelphos of Egypt, Antigonus Gonatus of Macedonia, Magas of Cyrene, and Alexander of Epirus, were his allies, to mention but a mere fraction of his kingly assets. Soon after his coronation he became a Buddhist, and from then on he delivered the gospel of *Maitri* (the bond of human relationship) from the pulpit of his throne. Asoka left his life philosophy as well as his instructions to his courtiers, ambassadors and generals on rocks and pillars, inscriptions which to this day mark about every strategic point on India's topographical triangle, and all of which proclaim the gospel of non-violence and love. Historians believe Asoka engaged in military operations only once in his entire lifetime, a record which is not nearly as important here as the rock inscription in which is immortalized the emperor's profound regret and remorse

that the conflict ever took place. To the Indian people this stone is a hallowed memorial to non-violence. It bears these words:

“[The country of] Kalinga was conquered when King Priyadarsin [Asoka], Beloved of the Gods, had been anointed eight years. One hundred and fifty thousand were there slain, and many times as many died.—Verily, the slaughter, death and captivity of the people, that occurs when an unconquered [country], is being conquered, is looked upon as extremely painful and regrettable by the Beloved of the Gods. . . . Nay, if any one does [him] wrong, the Beloved of the Gods must bear all that can be borne. . . . And this edict of Dharma [piety] has been recorded for this purpose. . . . Why? . . . in order that my sons and grandsons, whoever they may be, may not think of a new conquest as worth achieving, that in regard to a conquest possible only through arms . . . and that they may regard that to be the [real] conquest which is a conquest through Dharma [piety].”¹

In later life Asoka founded the first Buddhist missions, and sent missionaries to China and Cambodia, and lived to see that he had really “started something.” Thanks to Asoka, and without the use of the sword as in the case of other religions, Buddhism is practised by more men today than any other religion. From our point of view, however, Asoka is important as the first politician to apply non-violence to affairs of the state.

6. INDIAN MYSTICISM

The early centuries of the Christian era witnessed the continuous invasion of India by alien races and religions.

¹ The separate *Kalinga Edict*. From D. R. Bhandarkar's translation in *Asoka*, Calcutta, 1925.

The empire of Asoka, then under autocratic but weak rulers, went to pieces. It never again achieved its former place in the sun, and not even Kaniska or Harsha, who had some measure of success, could ever unify India under one central authority. Even during these chaotic centuries, religious activities were going on in the comparatively undisturbed forests of central India. They had, however, lost their original vigour as a direct result of contemporary political conditions. At this point the idea of non-violence was doubtless salvaged by the teachers who made up the *Puranas*. But as one might expect, *Ahimsa* became more of a doctrine of self-negation and unworldliness than a potential weapon of achieving ends. India bore only a ravished semblance to her old self when various Mohammedan hordes began their periodic penetration of the northern part. Eventually the stronger of the new conquerors settled down in India and began to build an empire based on bigotry and arms. Consequently the condition of the people, even under organized government, was as disordered as ever.

Out of the turmoil, in every part of India, there arose mystics, both Hindu and Mohammedan, who sought to reassure the people by reviving the wisdom of the past. Naturally, they advised the masses, through songs which soon became a universal possession, to regard the hardships of life as unreal. "Believe me," said Narasimha, "all worldly happiness is shadowy. All things except Krishna are ephemeral." They also exalted the power of non-violence and contended that love was stronger than revenge. As a result, the idea of non-violence soon got a firm foothold in the *Bhakti*, or devotion cult, which spread all over India between the tenth and nineteenth centuries. Prayer, purity, and devotion to God, according to the *Bhakti* teaching, were the individual's protection against the hardships of life. By preventing the people from spilling blood in order to better their condition,

these teachings steeled the Hindu faith in non-violence. Through the lofty voices of the mystics, the masses were again led to believe that the spirit of sacrificial suffering would redeem them eventually. In all the languages of India the songs of the mystics championed non-violence and in every refrain peace won a victory over passion. The sceptic has only to see the lyrics of Kabir and Nanak of the north, of Namdev, Tukaram, and Mukta-bai in the south, of Jaydev, Chandidas, and Chaitanya of Bengal, in order to be convinced. Mira, one of the greatest of the mystics and a woman, was inflicted with every imaginable torture by her husband and lord, the king. But her sheer devotion to Krishna and to the spirit of non-violence, according to the legend, made her the victor in the end. "Rana sends a cup of poison. Go and give it into the hands of Mira," she records in a song. And then, "Mira drank it as if it were nectar; the Lord of the Universe protected her." Narasimha of Gujarat had a similar experience. The King of Junagadha, in order to test the poet's sainthood, put him in an empty cell and then told his victim to produce a garland from the Lord before morning, or else he would be executed. The devotee poet prayed to his master throughout the night, and Krishna, just at dawn, sent an exquisite garland.

Hundreds of these legends, along with innumerable mystic songs, have created in India a general belief in the efficacy of non-violence. To Gandhi himself these songs are a source of genuine inspiration and he and his followers have never failed to realize the propagandic value of such lyrics in disseminating their ideology. The mystics of the Middle Ages, dead long ago, are still a living force in the cultural life of India.

7. CHRIST

Born a Hindu and brought up in Gujarat, the stronghold of the Jinas, Gandhi was also under the spell of

the songs of Narsimha and Mira, the two mystics who sang in his vernacular. Non-violence was thus an intrinsic part of his life from his very childhood. It is interesting to note that ninety per cent of Gandhi's contacts in England as a student were with people of pronounced religious convictions. Naturally he broke bread with many illustrious Christians and under their tutoring he made a comprehensive study of Christianity in general and of Christ's life in particular. Later, in South Africa, his chief recreation was to exchange viewpoints with the same type of people.

The Sermon on the Mount in the New Testament made a profound impression on Gandhi. In the text, "But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil but whoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also," he saw India's *Ahimsa* epitomized. Gandhi could fully appreciate the beauty of Christ's life, since it was also a life of true non-violent resistance. Here was a man who died to save men who refused to listen to his teachings. Christ's words, "Love your enemies; pray for them that persecute you," have played a decisive role in moulding Gandhi's policies. No one who knows Gandhi today is at all surprised when he refers to some of the incidents in Christ's life as concrete illustrations of the guiding principle of his Satyagraha.

This well of inspiration, springing as it did from a remote un-Indian source, made a definite impression on Gandhi's mind and filled him with enthusiasm for his most cherished aims in life. Christ, above all, was the personification of love and the Prince of Peace. He had to deal with the so-called materialistic mind of the West and prove the sovereignty of love in a land where physical force was the glory of the people. It was Christ's example of determination against great odds, it becomes evident on reading the Mahatma's autobiography, that stimulated Gandhi to go on with his Satyagraha experiments.

8. TOLSTOY

From the West, too, comes another influence upon Gandhi, that of Count Leo Tolstoy, who produced such a lasting effect upon India's leader that he still considers himself "a devoted admirer who owes much in life to him [Tolstoy]." The Russian's *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* appealed to Gandhi so much that in his youth he entered into correspondence with its author. When Gandhi's devotion to Tolstoy was at its peak he named his Satyagraha Retreat in South Africa after the great Russian. It is known as *Tolstoy Farm*, and is still functioning under the direction of Gandhi's second son, Mr. Manilal Gandhi.

The principle of non-violence as applied to social problems is found in Tolstoy's conviction that spiritual force has been, is now, and ever shall be the only force by which progress is made. "The sole guide which directs men and nations," wrote Tolstoy, "has always been and is the unseen, intangible, underlying force, the resultant of all the spiritual forces of a certain people, or of all humanity, which finds its outward expression in public opinion."¹

9. THOREAU

From the New World, Gandhi was inspired by the life and works of Henry Thoreau of Massachusetts. Thoreau's fight, almost single-handed, against slavery in the United States, imbued Gandhi with the faith that it is not the number of the resisters that counts in a Satyagraha, but the purity of the sacrificial suffering. "Wrists are impossible," Gandhi declared, "when they are confined to a few recalcitrants. They are troublesome when they have to be executed against many high-souled persons who have done no wrong and who refuse

¹ *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*, New York, 1894, p. 250.

payment to vindicate a principle. They may not attract much notice when isolated individuals resort to this method of protest. But clean examples have a curious method of multiplying themselves. They bear publicity and the sufferers instead of incurring odium receive congratulations. Men like Thoreau brought about the abolition of slavery by their personal examples."

When Gandhi wrote this passage, he was simply echoing the words of Thoreau, uttered years ago:

"I know this well," wrote Thoreau, "that if one thousand, if one hundred, if ten men whom I could name—if ten honest men only—aye, if one honest man, in this state of Massachusetts ceasing to hold slaves were actually to withdraw from this co-partnership and be locked up in the country gaol therefor, it would be the abolition of slavery in America. For it matters not how small the beginning may seem to be, what is once well done is done for ever."¹

When Thoreau wrote the above paragraph, he not only propounded the weapon of civil disobedience which constitutes one important stratagem in Gandhi's Satyagraha, but he also pointed out the potentiality of non-co-operation, which Gandhi enlarged upon afterwards as a means to destroy a corrupt state.

10. GANDHI

A child of India's long tradition of non-violence and a devoted student of Christ, of Tolstoy, and Thoreau, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the latest of the contributors to the doctrine of non-violence and the author of Satyagraha, was born on the second of October, 1869, at Porbandar. Capital of a native state, Porbandar

¹ See his *Essay on Civil Disobedience*, for fuller account of his views, in *Anti-slavery and Reform Papers*, selected and edited by H. S. Salt, London, 1890.

is situated in Kathiawar, a region dominated by the ascetic culture of Jainism. He comes from the *Vaisya* caste, or the caste of the husbandmen and traders, and his family has professed the Vaisnavā cult of Hinduism for centuries. *Vaisyas* are notorious for their pacifism which more often than not verges on timidity and down-right cowardice.

Son of the prime minister of the Native State, young Mohandas had everything he could desire. More alert and introspective than the ordinary run of students that he encountered in the town school, he became an atheist soon after settling in the school environment. It was perhaps a natural reaction to an over-religious atmosphere at home. He even ate meat, a sin unpardonable, in order to ~~shake~~ shake his caste out of its passivity and to advertise his scorn for a religion which bred cowardice. Lurking behind the act was also a desire to be as strong as the meat-eating Britons who ruled India, and towards whom he had cultivated a hostile attitude even at that early age.

He was engaged to be married when he was eight, and he married Kasturibai after his thirteenth birthday. He had no voice in the matter according to the usual custom of India, either in the choice of the bride or in the selection of the date for his marriage. He obeyed his parents. True to the normal pattern for a Hindu wife, Kasturibai has been devoted to him ever since, and she has subdued her personality to fit her husband's many-sided life. She has stood by him through all his adventures and through what others have called his idiosyncrasies—she has gone from fabulous riches to dire poverty, and has been his co-sufferer during his imprisonments and fastings, and even his *Brahmacharya* (celibacy).

At eighteen Gandhi sailed for London to study law. His mother, it is said, hated to see him go; she mistrusted the Western civilization. She could not be reconciled until she had exacted from young Mohandas a vow, made before

the family priest, to abstain from wine, meat, and sexual relations while abroad.

Besides his study at the Inner Temple, Gandhi displayed a great interest in Christianity. He read eighty books on the subject in just the first year of his stay in England. His contacts with the English Theosophists inspired him to study the most famous religious book of India, *The Bhagavad Gita*. He also read Mazzini and was thrilled with the prospect of applying the balm of nationalism to India's ills. He was also impressed by the British democracy as it functioned at home. He read Plato and Thoreau, and consumed page after page of Tolstoy.

In 1891, having been admitted to the Bar, he returned to India. His attempts at law practice in Bombay had not been particularly successful, when, on the verge of despair, he received a call from South Africa to conduct some litigation for an Indian firm doing business in Pretoria. His success there was so phenomenal that he settled down in Johannesburg instead of returning to India. Within a short time, he had built up a practice with an annual income exceeding £20,000!

The Indians in South Africa constituted not only a hopeless minority, but they were also unorganized and mostly illiterate. Consequently they were open to grave injustice and maltreatment. A committee of Hindus petitioned Gandhi not to leave South Africa when their brilliant legal representative was about to take a boat for India. They offered him large fees if he would agree to stay and help fight the cause of the Indians there. Gandhi granted their request but he refused all fees, because he felt that it was his duty to serve them.

For the next ten years he devoted all his time to organizing and guiding his compatriots in South Africa. He had abandoned his luxurious style of living so that he could identify himself with the poorest among the Indians and, consequently, command their confidence and loyalty. He taught them how to protect their legitimate

rights even though they were a poor and weak minority and had no arms. Africa was literally a laboratory for Gandhi to experiment upon his new formula for non-violent direct action. He built for their refuge a rural retreat, well known as the *Tolstoy Farm*, where any Indian would find a welcome provided he, like Gandhi, would take the oath of poverty and non-violence. Eventually he went back to London where he presented the case of his countrymen and succeeded in securing large concessions. But he was not satisfied with the result. Taking the next boat he went to India and canvassed for the cause of the Indians in South Africa. Thus he aroused the mother country to indignation. Back in South Africa, he was arrested, and was sentenced to fifteen months' imprisonment. Finally, in 1913, the Dominion Government met him more than halfway.

Just before the World War started, Gandhi was back in India. Naïvely confident that the Allies were innocent, he went so far as to advocate the recruitment of Indians who did not accept the principle of non-violence. He almost ruined his health enlisting soldiers for Great Britain. At the close of the War, however, Britain gave no recognition of either Gandhi's or India's services in the cause of the Allies. The demand for Home Rule, on the contrary, was met by laws which were so repressive that the Indian people were robbed of whatever freedom of assembly and expression they had enjoyed. The massacre of Amritsar was the crowning act of imperial arrogance and brutality.

Disillusioned beyond repair, Gandhi thereupon invited his countrymen to employ his novel weapon of non-violent direct action with a view to destroying the state maintained by the sheer force of arms. The subsequent history of India as well as the account of Gandhi's life is the story of the working of Satyagraha.

CHAPTER VII

EMERGENCE OF SATYAGRAHA

I. PROBLEM

“WE BELIEVE THAT it is the inalienable right of the Indian people, as of any other people, to have freedom and to enjoy the fruits of their toil and have the necessities of life so that they may have full opportunities of growth. We believe also that if any government deprives a people of these rights and oppresses them, the people have a further right to alter it or to abolish it. The British government in India has not only deprived the Indian people of their freedom but has based itself on the exploitation of the masses, and has ruined India economically, politically, culturally and spiritually. We believe, therefore, that India must sever the British connection and attain *Purna Swaraj* or complete independence.”

Here—in the opening paragraph of the Indian Declaration of Independence¹—is the Indian problem in a nutshell. A people, conscious of having been wronged and exploited, seek to better their lot by removing what seems to them to be the cause of their misery, namely, the British *Raj*. But how to cast off the foreign yoke has been a question for the last two hundred years. Gandhi's technique of Satyagraha is but one of the many methods that have been advanced in answer to this question. Our task in this chapter is to discover why Gandhi's method, as against so many others persistently advocated

¹ Drafted by Gandhi and proclaimed by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Declaration of Independence was endorsed by the peoples of India on January 26, 1930.

by prominent patriots and patriotic groups, has proved acceptable to the Indian people. Why did Satyagraha, and not some other movement, eventually obtain in India? What were the causes and conditions underlying the emergence of Satyagraha?

In the course of her long history India has known great statesmen and mighty politicians. But no one of them ever captured the imagination of the people as Gandhi has. India has seen great political associations and organizations come and go. But none of them ever evoked the devotion of the masses as the Gandhi-dominated National Congress has. The complete suppression of the Indian War of Independence of 1857, better known in the West as the "Sepoy Mutiny," failed to uproot the inner aspirations of the people to be free. The subsequent proclamation of Queen Victoria satisfied but few. The aspirations of the Indians continued to seek new channels of expression. But these were limited to mild and "loyal" associations whose sole dispatch of business was to draw up petitions, entreaties, and inoffensive resolutions. The politicians themselves realized that they were getting nowhere, and the people were apathetic toward statesmen who had no programme to offer. They did not care to know even the names of the so-called leaders and their "debating societies." The shocking impotency of legitimate and parliamentary activity as a means to attaining economic and political ends opened the way for a militant programme. The people were prepared to act, but their spokesmen knew only how to petition the authorities. A leader with a programme which would set free the dormant energies of the people was bound to succeed in rallying the entire nation behind his banner. Direct action, violent or otherwise, had become the historic necessity.

At this psychological moment Gandhi entered upon the Indian scene with his ideology of Satyagraha—non-violent direct action¹—and in a twinkling of an eye, as

¹ As a matter of chronological fact, the first try-out of Satyagraha took place in South Africa in 1906. Commenting on the birth of the movement,

it were, the people embraced his novel weapon. Their pulse began to throb with enthusiasm and new hopes. They felt the presence in their midst of a redeemer at long last.

But why did the Indian people respond to Gandhi's call for Satyagraha so readily? Why did they not resort to the most common means for dealing with such hopeless situations—the method of violence? Why did they prefer non-violent direct action, a comparatively novel weapon, to violent direct action, a tried technique known to man since the beginning of history?

2. CONDITION

The most obvious answer, and the one which has nevertheless remained unnoticed by most students of Indian affairs, seems to be the fact that the Indian people were, and are, completely disarmed. As a penal measure for the so-called "Sepoy Mutiny," a general programme of disarming the whole of India was set in motion by the victorious Britons. This policy culminated in the Indian Arms Act, 1878, which deprived all Indians, excluding Europeans living in India, of their right to have in their "possession any arms of any description, except

Gandhi writes: "None of us knew what name to give to our ~~movement~~. I then used the term 'passive resistance' in describing it. I did not quite understand the implication of 'passive resistance' as I called it. I only knew that some new principle had come into being. As the struggle advanced, the phrase 'passive resistance' gave rise to confusion.—Sr. Maganlal Gandhi—suggested the word 'Sadagraha,' meaning 'firmness in a good cause.' I liked the word, but it did not fully represent the whole idea I wished it to connote. I therefore corrected it to 'Satyagraha.' Truth (Satya) implies love and firmness (Agraha) engenders and therefore serves as a synonym for force. I thus began to call the Indian movement 'Satyagraha,' that is to say, the Force which is borne of Truth and Love or non-violence. . . ." (M. K. Gandhi, *Satyagraha in South Africa*, Madras, 1928, pp. 172-3.)

This quotation as well as Gandhi's other disclosures makes it clear that though he was the actual author of the technique, the Indian people were his collaborators. In other words, Satyagraha as such represents the culmination of India's non-violent tradition. (This point is dealt with more fully in the preceding chapter.) This, coupled with the fact that even in South Africa it was the Indian people, under the same leader, who evolved and utilized Satyagraha, leads us to explain the emergence of Satyagraha more in terms of India.

under a licence and in the manner and to the extent permitted thereby.”¹ The privilege of “licence” proved in practice to be reserved for none but a handful of Indian officers whose loyalty to the “Crown” was beyond the shadow of a doubt. The subsequent interpretations of the Arms Act by British judges made the original statute more and more stringent until the definition of “arms” came to include “any implement which is capable of being used for attack or defence and is not intended for ordinary domestic purposes. . . .”² This decision prohibits the possession of “a large clasp-knife with a pointed end fitted to a long handle.”³ In theory, therefore, an Indian is not to have even a knife such as the one used by the average American housewife for cutting a loaf of bread. As a consequence of Britain’s determination to keep the Indian people unarmed, even the villagers living in, or near, dense jungles have no means at their disposal to protect themselves and their families from the wild animals. A moderate estimate of the number of deaths caused each year by wild animals (over and above the heavy toll taken by poisonous reptiles) puts the figure at 30,000. Instead of saving these lives by allowing the forest-dwellers to arm themselves, the government has steadily pursued a policy of preserving wild animals in order to provide the *White Sahibs* and other Europeans with the thrill of “big game.” In the light of these facts, it seems to have been the deliberate policy of the ruling race to emasculate the Indian people as the best means of perpetuating British rule. A people thus deprived of every implement of self-defence became what Gandhi calls “a nation of cowards.”

The result is obvious. Even in case the Indian should want to resort to violence in order to liberate his country, he would have no means at his disposal. It is wellnigh impossible to import arms, for every inch of the Indian

¹ *Encyclopedia of the General Acts and Codes of India*, Calcutta, 1935, p. 129.

² *Ibid.*, p. 126. The interpretation is taken from the judgment delivered in the case of the *Emperor vs. Satish Chandra Roy*.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 126. (*King Emperor vs. Nga Lu Gale*, 1927.)

border is patrolled, day and night, by British troops. "The Local Government," runs the Arms Act, "with the previous sanction of the Governor General in Council, may, at any places along the boundary-line between British India and foreign territory, and at such distance within such line as it deems expedient, establish searching-posts at which all vessels, carts and baggage animals, and all boxes, bales and packages in transit, may be stopped and searched for arms, ammunition and military stores by any officer empowered by such Government in this behalf by name or in virtue of his office."¹ Terrorizing penalties awaiting the violator of the Arms Act, coupled with the vigilant activities of the CID, which to the Indians appears to be the counterpart of the Soviet OGPU and the German Gestapo, would more than dissuade the Indian from any intention of acquiring arms. If he ever did succeed in acquiring some sort of a firearm, he would not know which end of it to hold in his hands.² And even if he did know the use of the implements of violence, he would have to pursue his course as a lone wolf. For in India as anywhere else, it is impossible, legally, to organize on the basis of terrorism and bloodshed.

This legal disability pertaining to weapons of war was indeed unfavourable to armed revolt. However, that alone cannot account for the emergence of Satyagraha. It is, at best, a partial answer to our original question of why Gandhi succeeded where others failed. For there are certain factors in the Indian situation as well as outside of India which are not explained solely by the condition of disarmament that we have just described, nor do they seem to be the results thereof.

For one thing, disarmament at the hands of the conquerors is the common experience of practically all sub-

¹ *Encyclopedia of the General Acts and Codes of India*, Calcutta, 1935, p. 128.

² There have been stray attempts to import "illicit arms" into India, but all of them have ended disastrously. The most famous attempt of the sort was engineered by the sturdy Sikhs of Canada and California during the World War. The *Comagatamaru*, the ship on which they sailed, however, was sighted and caught near Calcutta and all the occupants were reported massacred.

ject peoples.¹ In fact, disarming the conquered people is the first measure taken by most imperialist powers in order to perpetuate their gains. The interesting fact, however, is that almost all conquered peoples except the Indians have resorted to violence of one sort or another in order to achieve their liberation. Throughout history, being disarmed has also been the common experience of many minority groups.² They either submitted to the majority group's oppressions or resorted to violence to attain political rights. Only the East Indian minority in South Africa refused to submit to the exploitation of the majority group, viz., the Union Government of the whites, and at the same time refrained from employing violence as a means to redress its wrongs. It evolved, instead, the technique of Satyagraha.

In the second place, there has always existed in India, and there still exists, especially in Bengal and the Punjab, a very small group of patriots who believe in using violence as a means to effect their country's emancipation. They have found arms, albeit at practically insurmountable hazards, and they have thrown bombs to terrorize the Britons in India. But their tactics have never become popular with the Indian masses as terroristic methods did in the case of Ireland. Still more significant is the fact that even those who died as martyrs to the cause of terrorism have not gained the admiration they deserved. Not only has the cult of violence failed to achieve threatening proportions, but it has also reaped the criticism and condemnation of the very people it proposed to benefit.

Last, but far from being the least, is the evidence offered by the reactions of the Mohammedan community to Gandhi's creed of non-violence. Although, in Gandhi's judgment, the Moslems in India are more like their

¹ To cite only modern examples: the Arabs, first under the Ottomans, and following the World War, under France (Syria) and England (Iraq, Palestine, et al.); the Negroes of Africa under various European governments; the Manchurians under Japan; the Koreans under Japan, et al.

² The Jews throughout the ages; the Armenians under the Turks, etc.

Hindu compatriots than their co-religionists outside of India, they were hesitant, in the early days of the movement, about putting their faith in the efficacy of non-violence. They were labouring under the self-same disabilities as the Hindus, but they had slightly different set of folkways and mores. Consequently they were slower than the Hindus in assimilating the spirit of *Ahimsa*, or non violence.

These facts demonstrate that the mere state of forced disarmament has not prevented many oppressed groups from resorting to violence. It might not have stood even in the way of the Hindus had they sincerely desired to rise in an armed revolt against alien exploiters. It then follows that the social milieu alone cannot account for the acceleration of dynamic forces or for the restraint thereof. They must be engineered by the mentality of man as well. The outer has to have its conformation or its counterpart in the inner in order to produce a social change. The "condition" of India,—the historico-political situation—must have conformed with her "tradition"—the constellation of folkways and mores—to give rise to Satyagraha. There must have been something in the Hindu's temperament, something more than what could be ascribed to the general military disability, which has always pulled him back from shedding blood even in order to obtain liberation. The important role of temperamental traits in shaping social action seems to have been grasped by Gandhi. He displays a fair knowledge of the mentality of the people—the *people of the plains* as he calls them—that he has to deal with. For he wrote as early as November 24, 1921, in *Young India* :

"The people are too peaceful to stand anarchy. They will bow the knee to any one who restores so-called order. Let us recognize the Indian psychology. We need not stop to inquire whether such hankering after peace is a virtue or a vice. The average Mussulman of India is quite different from the average Mussulman of the other parts

of the world. His Indian associations have made him more docile than his co-religionists outside India. He will not stand tangible insecurity of life and property for any length of time. The Hindu is proverbially, almost contemptibly, mild. The Parsi and the Christian love peace more than strife. Indeed, we have almost made religion subservient to peace. This mentality is at once our weakness and our strength."

That such people would not and could not use military force is self-evident. Yet they must do something more than protest if they want to attain decisive objectives. Implying that Satyagraha was the only possibility arising out of the unusual situation of India, Gandhi wrote on March 2, 1922:

"The people of the plains do not know what it is to put up an organized armed fight. And they must become free, for they want freedom. They have realized that power seized by violence will only result in their greater grinding."

It was this accurate notion of the Indian mentality that won for Gandhi immediate response from the masses. So when Gandhi offered his programme of non-violent direct action to the people of India, they felt as if they were listening to their own voice. The silent assumptions of centuries had begun to take shape, as it were, in Gandhi's utterances. Gandhi had discovered India's traditional springs of emotion. What then remained for him to do was to blast them free and to divert the resultant flow into one vast, tidal wave.

What, then, is the Indian mentality? What are the traditions of India, her folkways and mores, that, interacting upon the "condition," have brought about Satyagraha?

3. TRADITION

No foreign observer can possibly escape being impressed by India's long religious tradition of non-violence as

evidenced in the day-to-day behaviour patterns of the people. He may travel from frontier to frontier and come across diverse groups of peoples possessing divergent folkways. He may come into contact with different cults and creeds, and even with people of marked racial variations. But the one thing by which he is sure to be impressed is the more or less uniformly negative attitude of all Indians toward killing and bloodshed. Non-killing of any living thing, preached by saints and seers from the beginning of the Indo-Aryan history, has exceeded the bounds of a religious tenet and acquired the proportions of the most dominant culture-trait. The idea moulds the philosophy of life of the individual Indian and governs his everyday activity. It even regulates the diet of many Hindus. Higher caste Hindus in certain provinces are strict vegetarians because non-vegetarian food involves the taking of life. The Jainas, extending this principle to its extreme, distinguish between advanced vegetable life and more dormant vegetable life, refusing to eat vegetables that grow under ground. Potatoes and onions, in fact, all kinds of root vegetables, are anathema to them. Their priests, who always travel on foot, avoid journeys in the rainy season because during that period they are apt to kill more insects. Lest the microscopic germs in the air be killed by their emission of warm breath while talking or preaching, they keep their lips covered with a piece of cloth day in and day out.

This tradition of non-injury to a living thing, however lowly, seems to have become more imbedded in the Indian culture during the past hundred years of disarmed subjection to the British than ever before. On its negative side, it has implanted a genuine disgust of violence and bloodshed in the minds of most Indians. In its positive aspect, it has engendered a sort of faith in non-violence as a means to any end. Legends glorifying the effectiveness of non-violence as an instrument of securing even worldly goods abound in the folklore of India

—that treasure trove of myths, legends and sagas—which provide the main source of culture for ninety per cent of the Indian population which can neither read nor write. These stories are passed on through generations by mere word of mouth. The following is a sample of such legends which most Indians, illiterate though they may be, know by heart:

The story goes that Mahavira, the founder of Jainism, meditated for several years under a tree. The forest around him was full of wild animals and poisonous snakes. But Mahavira's spirit of non-violence neutralized the venom of the reptiles and the violence of the tiger and the lion. Finally, the animals surrounded him in deep devotion, and the snakes protected his benumbed body from the sun by constructing a canopy of their hoods. The animals forgot their animosity even among themselves, and deer sat side by side with the lion and the leopard looking at Mahavira.

To illiterate and superstitious Indians, such popular stories give abundant basis for faith in the efficacy of non-violence. To sophisticated Indians, the philosophic implications of the idea give a sufficient background for Satyagraha.

No study of the mores, folkways and culture-traits of India, however cursory, can afford to neglect the institution of caste and its possible influence on the phenomenon in question. Caste is not merely a stratification of the Hindu community, it is a distinguishing characteristic of India. Even the Moslems and the Christians have compromised with the "spirit of the soil" and adopted caste, in some form or other, as an integral part of their respective community life. In this discussion, however, we are not concerned with caste as such. We intend to disclose only those particular inner attitudes of the caste-bound people that have paved the way for the emergence of Satyagraha.

The division of labour and the distribution of functions

that underlie the caste hierarchy have from an early period restricted the use of weapons to a particular group. The *Kshatriyas* (warriors), second in rank, early assumed the function of defending the entire community. In effect this meant that the protection of the state was confined to a comparatively small class which could not be recruited from outside. This resulted in a dearth of new blood. Denied the circulation of élites, the *Kshatriyas* became more and more unfit to bear the burden of the state defence solely by themselves. The remaining castes—*Brahmins* (priests), *Vaiśyas* (husbandmen or traders), and *Sudras* (serfs)—were spared the concern of bearing arms either for aggression or for defence. The superior *Brahmins* looked down upon the profession of arms, and the prosperous *Vaiśyas* were glad to be free from the hardships of military life.¹ Consequently, all but the warriors lost the fighting instinct that their Aryan forebears had brought with them from beyond the ranges of the Hindu Kush and the Himalayas. The natural instinct of self-defence lost its edge under the dulling effect of caste.

Slowly but steadily the profession of arms began to decline in the esteem of the community. This process has been greatly aggravated by the British policy of distinguishing between the so-called "martial races" of India and the gentry. The *Kshatriya* was the second in the hierarchy in the early days of caste. Since the British occupation of India, however, he has been ranked third in certain parts of the country.² The original hero is now little better than a menial labourer. It is bad for a lady to talk to any person not belonging to her community, but to talk to a soldier would be unthinkable.³

¹ Cf. Barton, W. P., "Caste and the Indian Military Problem," in the *Contemporary Review*, London, December, 1931.

² In Gujarat, Maharashtra, and certain southern regions, the *Vaiśya* claims to be higher than the *Kshatriya* by the simple expedient of imposing on himself commensal restrictions and connubial prohibitions.

³ The impact of Western civilization, introduced through the ruling Britons, and the process of industrialization have tended to slacken many a rigidity of the caste system. Now there is no limit to the number of inter-caste dinners, a thing unheard of some four decades ago, and more and more

Today the art of warfare is looked down upon by, and thought to be no concern of, the civilian population. When the British began to employ the so-called "martial races"¹ in the Indian army, the prospects of closer intermingling between the small military caste of India and the overwhelming civilian population was sealed. The army became a thing apart, never seeking, or even attracting recruits from the people at large. The population forgot, as it were, that it should know the art of self-defence and that it should have an army. This factor, coupled with the first-mentioned tradition of non-violence, is enough to account for the success of the Arms Act.

As an inevitable consequence, the Indian people is averse to bearing arms. On the contrary, it glories in the superiority of non-violence²—perhaps a reflex measure of its own limitations.

The third in line is the Hindu's faith in fate. The doctrine of *Karma* (merit) possesses a literalness of terrible, universal, and inescapable application to the Indian. That each receives according to his merits, and loses likewise, is a universal belief in India. Nowhere else is the dictum "as a man sows so shall he reap" so firmly believed. This type of reasoning gives rise to an attitude of utter resignation. It breeds a blind reliance in divine dispensation and roots out the zest for endeavour and strife. In India, consequently, the doctrine of *Karma* has grown

inter-caste marriages take place every year. Progressively each year larger and larger numbers of men are taking to professions not proper to their particular caste. There is comparative mobility in the opportunities for earning a living. But very few outside of *Kshatriyas* have ever sought military service as their occupation. Many *Kshatriyas*, on the other hand, have gone into professions other than the military. This significant fact in itself might be a product of many forces, chief among them, it seems, being the general disarmament and the country's spirit of non-violence. The subject, however, awaits an intensive study.

¹ Rajputs and Dogras of Gujarat and Rajputana; Sikhs of the Punjab; Jats, mostly Punjabis; Ahirs of Gujarat; Marathas of Deccan; Punjabi Muslims and the Frontier Afghans.

into fatalism, and the teeming millions have eternally sought satisfaction amidst dissatisfactory conditions. "Two hundred million Hindus are in the habit of asking when faced by a crisis, 'Whoever could wipe off the writing on the brow?' and of shaking their heads knowingly and resigning themselves to the inevitable. Not that they yield without struggle, self-defence being rooted in human nature. But that struggle is almost a reflex action, not a conscious, firm effort. The heart is not in it."¹

This attitude works against taking up arms to secure economic and political ends. In fact, it is unfavourable to any sort of struggle. However, when it comes to choosing between the two, between armed insurrection and Satyagraha, it is easier for the fatalistic and *Karma*-bound Indian to cast his lot with the latter.

The three fundamental culture-traits discussed so far, namely, *Ahimsa* (non-violence), caste, and *Karma*, together with the inner attitudes fostered by them, have contributed more or less negatively to the emergence of Satyagraha. They have engendered an aversion to violence in the mind of the Indian and have blocked any concerted military activity on the part of the people. The remaining three factors of the Indian culture which directly relate to our problem—and their attendant attitudes—seem to have made positive contribution to the ideology of non-violent direct action.

The Hindu doctrine of sacrifice—the conducting of all individual and group activities in the spirit of sacrificial offering to the Ultimate Reality—is the first culture-trait in this group. From time immemorial, the practice of sacrifice has been accepted as having peculiar magical values by virtue of which the devout could attain their desired ends when faced with a crisis. This conception of sacrifice makes it a potential means to achieve objectives,

¹ Battacharya, Bhabani, "The Drug of Fatalism," in *Asia*, New York, April, 1937, p. 285.

and activities undertaken in the spirit of sacrifice, consequently, result in a veritable spiritual force. As we have seen, this idea of sacrifice is radically different from similar practices found in other races and peoples. For to the Vedic Aryans, sacrifice was an automaton which fulfilled the prayers of its performer irrespective of the pleasures or displeasures of the gods. What was true of the Vedic Hindu is more true of the contemporary masses of India, for have not all the sages and saints, without exception, preached the same doctrine in one form or another? The myriad tales on the tip of the tongue of the Indian testify to the fact that sacrifice has time and again proved efficacious.

The final reality of a sacrificial act is the degree of suffering incurred by the individual or the group performing it. You do not make a sacrifice unless in so doing you give up a dear possession or a comfort. In the long run, suffering itself becomes a value, a reservoir of energy and power. There is always the growing conviction that one's suffering is bound to produce tangible results. This line of thought and experience sometimes develops into masochism, a desire, and even a demand, for suffering. The best example of this sort is the Jaina sect of Gujarat by which Gandhi seems to have been greatly influenced in his early life. His spasmodic fasts undertaken in the interest of one cause or another are patterned after the Jaina practice of suffering for spiritual elevation. What is more significant, these fasts (a form of *self-purification* stage of Satyagraha) of Gandhi have time and again produced tangible results, as in the case of his *fast unto death* undertaken in behalf of the untouchables. Hence Gandhi's dictum that "the law of suffering" never fails and that "no country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering." It is India who speaks through Gandhi.

Satyagraha, which bases its effectiveness on the principle of incurring suffering rather than inflicting suffering on

the opponent as the cult of violence does, consequently conforms to India's experience of centuries.

Still one more factor which heralded the emergence of Satyagraha in India is the Hindu view of human nature. The Hindu conception of the divinity of man—the *Atman-Brahman* equation of the Upanishadic teaching—has naturally exerted a powerful influence in moulding the Indian mentality. According to this theory, the individuality (*Atman*) is at best an infinitesimally partial manifestation of the all-pervading and all-inclusive World-Soul (*Brahman*). As such, we all are divine, however partially, and our limitations are the limitations of individuality. Our goal, therefore, is to discard our limitations and, by so doing, become the Universal Soul. By expanding our consciousness like the ripples in the water, the individual man finally becomes the Universal Reality itself. A drop of water is a mere drop of water, the sages have said, as long as it hangs in balance, but as soon as it falls into the ocean, it becomes the ocean itself. Sang the Upanishads:

“As the sparks from the well-kindled fire,
In nature akin to it, spring forth in their thousands,
So, my dear sir, from the imperishable
Living beings of many kinds go forth,
And again return into him.”

This fundamental belief of the Hindu gives him an abiding faith in the “ultimate goodness” of human nature. Given a chance, the selfishness of man is bound to give way to the social consciousness within him—it is but a question of the right action to invoke the right reaction. Satyagraha, which aims at a *change of heart*, consequently finds ready recruits in India.

Bound up with this is the conviction of the Indian that “truth triumphs eventually.” There being nothing independent of, or beyond, the World-Soul, there is but

one truth, one cosmic law, as the final reality. "Truth alone wins," the Indian always says when faced with odds. "Sometimes the face of Truth," he remembers the exhortations of sages, "is obscured by golden disguises. You have to uncover it, man!" And have not all righteous persons been oppressed by powers of evil, by powers that be? And has not each of them, the Indian argues with himself, emerged victorious after trying ordeals? The folklore of India is full of such tales. He knows, therefore, that though it may be hard at first, he is bound to win if truth is on his side. The sheer truth of his claim, he believes, is bound to overcome eventually all opposing might, including physical and military.

That there is a force greater than the physical is the basic assumption of the theory of Satyagraha. The Indian people, who have always believed in this argument, therefore, provide most fertile ground for Satyagraha to flourish.

4. EMERGENCE OF A PURE INSTRUMENT

The condition of general disarmament interacting upon the *ethos* that has moulded the attitudes of the Indian people appears to have produced the technique of Satyagraha. Non-violent direct action, likewise, seems to be a culmination of Indian culture and the military disability of the Indians. Our argument, however, should not stop here, for Satyagraha, over and above being a movement of the Indian people, is also a technique of solving social conflict, applicable to other countries as well. While such a technique would naturally arise out of such a condition-tradition complex as exists in India, and people possessing such attitudes as the Indians are apt to adopt more readily the group of social processes called Satyagraha, nevertheless these culture-traits and conditional restrictions are not indispensable for the successful operation of Satyagraha. Satyagraha, as a technique, pure and simple, can be adopted by any people

as easily as new methods of warfare or an alien architectural design, making due allowances for differences in situations. It can be substituted for war as simply as outmoded airplanes can be replaced by faster and more powerful ones, if the people deliberately and consciously so desire. Our observation is based upon an astounding example of the successful operation of Satyagraha among a people diametrically different from the Indians in their culture and military status. We refer to the ferocious Pathans on India's northwest boundary and the unruly and reckless tribes that inhabit the *no man's land* between India and Afghanistan.

Until 1930, the Northwest Frontier Province and the people inhabiting it were to an average Indian more remote than some foreign lands. Most of the illiterate Indians did not even know of the existence of such a region within the boundaries of India. To the very few educated men of India, the province signified a danger spot on India's northern border. The very mention of the province reminded them of the "red spot" on India's northern horizon and of the Britons' pet bogey—the *Russian menace*.

The average Indian's feeling that he was "different" from the stout and sturdy Pathans on the north was brought about by his acrimonious experience on one hand, and by the continued propaganda of the ruling race on the other. The Pathan money-lenders pouring in on the plains of India from the northern hills had created a feeling of distrust in the Indian. A series of "punitive tribal expeditions," some of which ended in the British paying the tribesmen "subsides" for the latter's guarantee of "good behaviour," had instilled in the minds of the Indians of the plains a picture of the ferocious and unruly northerners. Even the nationalist leaders manifested misgivings as to the Pathans. Gandhi, along with the Congress high command, diplomatically avoided the inclusion of these northwestern people in India's fight for freedom.

But on the 23rd of April, 1930, the whole of India was made "frontier conscious" by astounding and swift-moving happenings on India's northwestern border. While the entire nation was engaged in the great Civil Disobedience Movement, and Gandhi was breaking the Salt Law, at Port Dandi, news came that the Pathans of the Northwest Frontier Province had joined the rest of India in its fight for freedom. It was also reported from Peshawar that there already had been two shootings by the British troops to suppress the movement among the Pathans. The people's side estimated the number of deaths "at not less than 500," while the government put it much lower. The most salient feature of the whole incident was that those warlike and sharp-shooting Pathans, those who died and those who survived, stuck to non-violence not only under the gravest provocation but in the face of a deadly and prolonged fusillade. An eyewitness, writing in Gandhi's *Young India* of May 29, 1930, summed up his impressions as follows:

- "1. Nearly five hundred men¹ have lost their lives.
2. They all died in a strictly non-violent manner, bravely courting bullets in their chests.
3. They could have created the most terrible riot if they² were not actuated by a touching, though perhaps a blind faith in 'Baba Gandhi.'"

The two-century-old mental barrier between the Indian people of the plains and the mountaineer Pathans of the north was levelled overnight as a direct consequence of the Peshawar happenings.¹ The National Congress opened its doors to the so-called violent tribesmen. It received in return thousands of new recruits for its non-violent direct action, and was able to set up a nucleus

¹ For a fuller account, see *Government Communiqués* of April 23, 27, and 28, and May 6. For a comparative study, see the reports of the *Sulaiman Committee* (appointed by the British government), and of the *Patel Committee* (appointed by the Indian National Congress).

of a National Congress organization in the Northwest Frontier Province which in the last national elections succeeded in forming the governing ministry of that province. Great as this contribution to India's struggle is, it has a greater significance in relation to the theory of Satyagraha. It has given the lie to the general charge that "Satyagraha is a weapon of the vegetarian weaklings of India," and that non-violent direct action can never be successfully used by the militaristic peoples of both the East and the West.

It is hard to find two peoples more unlike each other in their physical and temperamental features than the Pathans and the Indians. In order to show that Satyagraha can be used by even the "bellicose peoples," and that the more organized and public-spirited the users of it the greater is its success, the following study in contrast of the Hindu and the Pathan is given here. We will start with the respective leaders of the two groups in question.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, leader of the Indian people of the plains, is a Hindu who abhors meat and comes from a caste (*Vaisya*) which is notorious for its passivity and mildness. Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, leader of Pathan mountaineers, is a Mohammedan meat-eater and comes from a nomad tribe (*Mohmadzai*) which is famous for its reckless bravery and what the authorities call unruliness.

Known all over India as the Frontier Gandhi, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan seems almost twice as tall as the Mahatma. While Gandhi weighs ninety pounds, the Frontier Gandhi tips the scale at 220. An English lad of fourteen could knock Gandhi down with a side punch. The Khan could probably keep a couple of British Tommies busy in a brawl. It is doubtful whether Gandhi has ever held a gun in his hands. The Frontier Gandhi comes from a family renowned for its sharpshooters. Gandhi's father was the prime minister of an orderly Native State

in India. The Khan's father was the chief of the village of Utmanzai in Peshawar, who saw the hectic days of the "Sepoy Mutiny."

Gandhi's *Ashrama* (social service retreat) is in the fertile plains of Gujarat on the banks of Sabramati. The Frontier Gandhi's retreat is on the river Swat, surrounded on all sides by the hills of the Hindu Kush, and within the earshot of the bullets in the Khyber Pass. Now almost baldheaded, Gandhi garbs himself in a mere loin cloth. The Frontier Gandhi, with close-cropped black hair and a pointed beard, puts on simple but sufficient robes.

Gandhi was educated in England and is a barrister-at-law. The Frontier Gandhi began his education in a *maklab* (religious school) in a mosque "where *maulvis* (priests) taught the Holy Koran and gave a smattering of secular subjects." Later he entered an English school, but "unfortunately did not pass the matriculation examination."¹ Although Gandhi is a revolutionist in the English eyes, he is hailed as a "peaceful rebel." But "Abdul Gaffar," says Sir Michael O'Dwyer, and this statement has been contradicted by the Khan himself, "is in close touch with the hostile Frontier tribes and is the son-in-law of our most persistent enemy, the Haji of Turangzai, who has so often in recent years roused the Mohmands, Afridis and other tribes to attack Peshawar itself."² Although the ex-satrap of the Frontier Province lacks in evidence and is mistaken in his facts, he symbolizes the official attitude toward Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan.

Gandhi and the Frontier Gandhi, however, have in common deep religious faith and spirituality. As a result of Gandhi's influence, the Khan has acquired a passion for non-violence comparable to that of his master. Ever

¹ His elder brother, however, studied medicine in England, and his son came to the United States to study.

² In an article in the *Morning Post*, London. But on the contrary, the Khan's father-in-law was Sultan Muhammed Khan of Rajjar, who supported the British government until his death. „

since the Non-co-operation Movement of 1920-21, Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan has been a staunch follower of Mahatma Gandhi. He owns large land plots and other properties in the Peshawar district and his word is regarded as law by the Pathan masses. In 1920 he started his constructive activities by founding a nationalist school at his village, Utmanzai, and tried to spread its branches in other parts of the province. Then followed his numerous incarcerations by the British, who saw in his school the seeds of a powerful movement. True to the apprehensions of the authorities, the school turned out numerous workers and became the nucleus of the vast organization that later came to be known as the *Khudai Khidmatgars*, or the Servants of God. The membership of this body is estimated at one hundred thousand volunteers, every one of whom is pledged to strict non-violence.

How do these *Khudai Khidmatgars*, the soldiers of the Frontier Gandhi's non-violent army, compare with the Satyagrahis, the soldiers of Mahatma Gandhi's non-violent army? What are the cultural, situational and temperamental differences between them—these two groups which have observed, equally effectively, the inhibitions of non-violence?

The Satyagrahis of India, in Gandhi's words, are "the people of the plains." The *Khudai Khidmatgars* are drawn from tribes inhabiting the mountainous regions of the Northwest, the hills and dales of Peshawar. The people of India are absolutely disarmed and have no immediate access to foreign territory in order to import arms. The Pathans of the Northwest Frontier, not so thoroughly disarmed to begin with, are in constant communication with the tribes dwelling in the *no man's land* and with the Afghans who might easily supply them with weapons of war. By and large, the Indian does not know which end of a gun to hold in his hands. The Pathans, on the contrary, are among the so-called martial races of India, famous as sharpshooters. The Indian Army has drawn

heavily from among their ranks. While it is legally impossible to have organizations of Indians pledged to violence, the Pathans have their tribal and military confederacies.

Over and above these situational disparities, there are significant differences of culture and temperament between the Hindu and the Pathan. As already observed, the Hindu has a long tradition of non-violence as a background for his Satyagrahic activities. The Pathan has no such background and, what is more revealing, he is considered "cruel and bloodthirsty."¹ Furthermore, the caste-bound Hindu is not concerned with national defence; for he has relegated the art of war to the *Kshatriyas*. The Pathan, on the contrary, has no caste. All are equal according to the Islamic doctrine, and all form one community. There is no division of function among the Pathans analogous to the division created by the Hindu caste system. The Pathan lives in a cultural milieu "where every man has to defend his own life and honour."

The Hindu has his *Karma*; everybody receives according to his own merit. Believing as he does in divine dispensation, he leaves the task of reward and retribution to the Universal Law. Not so with the Pathans, at least not in practice; the old Semitic rule, "an eye for an eye, a life for life," holds good among them. Nor has the Pathan any culture-trait analogous to the Indian's faith in the power of suffering. Furthermore, since he does not believe in the divinity of man, he lacks the Hindu faith in the ultimate goodness of human nature. It may be that truth triumphs in the end, but the Pathan is temperamentally too impatient to wait for it.

And yet under the leadership of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan he has surpassed the Hindu in patience, suffering and non-violence. Having once deliberately and consciously subscribed to the creed of non-violence, and

¹ Cf. Scott, George B., *Afghan and Pathan: A Sketch*, London, 1929, p. 29.

having once adopted Satyagraha as a means to acquire ends, the Pathans of the northwest have displayed an equal, if not greater, mastery of Gandhi's non-violent direct action—equal to that shown by their diametrically different Hindu compatriots. The lack of the Hindu's tradition of *Ahimsa* and the plainsman's military disability has not prevented the Pathans from conforming to the inhibitions of non-violence. It has been a common experience in India that the Pathan's sense of honour, their endurance, and their military organization have often made them more effective as Satyagrahis than the Indians from the plains.

The study of the emergence of Satyagraha in India and among the Pathans of the northwest suggests some conclusions of a general nature. That Satyagraha is an outcome of the interaction of the Hindu tradition and the condition of India is self-evident. It seems, too, that disarmed people and oppressed minorities may find in non-violent direct action their much-needed weapon. However, Satyagraha as a technique pure and simple does not require the Hindu tradition and the Indian condition for its adoption and successful operation. Peoples differing in culture and in temperament from the Indians—such as the Pathans—can also utilize it successfully if they adopt it consciously and deliberately. It is a technique just as war is, and it can be just as universally applied. Of course, in other countries, a Satyagraha operation will have to be preceded by a long and arduous indoctrination in non-violence. The Indians did not need it, but the Pathans had to go through the process under the guidance of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan; hence the delay in the Pathan participation in the non-violent movement of the nationalists. Like Pathans, those people who do not have the tradition of non-violence such as that of the Hindus, will have to be indoctrinated into non-violence before they can (or would) employ Satyagraha to achieve their ends.

CHAPTER VIII

THE LEADER WITH A HALO

“When Righteousness
Declines, O Bharata! When Wickedness
Is strong, I rise, from age to age, and take
Visible shape, and move a man with man,
Succouring the good, thrusting the evil back,
And setting Virtue on her seat again.”

THIS GOLDEN PROMISE was given to the Hindus by the Lord; it is recorded in *Bhagavad-Gita*, their Bible. Now, after centuries of retelling, they trust in its fulfilment just as Christians believe in a Day of Atonement. According to Hindu theology, God incarnates Himself, or takes *Avatara*, whenever He sees fit, in order to protect His good children, and to destroy those who beleaguer them. Suffering unbearably today, tomorrow we will have an answer from the Golden Promise—thus the Hindu of all ages has comforted himself.

Every Hindu familiar with the *Puranas*, the sacred books, knows that each age (*Yuga*) has had an *Avatara*. There have been nine such already, manifesting in their sequence the process of evolution.

Now it was ordained that there would be yet another incarnation, and that “virtue would be set on her seat” a tenth time, thereby ending this present *Kali Yuga* (Age of Darkness). This time the “Man among men” would be *Kalki*, say the *Puranas*, and it would be His pleasure to usher in an era of light by destroying the malignants who bedevil His people.

In the hour of destitution and agony, the Hindu is wont to look up to the high heavens and wait for an *Avatara* to come down on earth and clear the path for him. This is not merely his individual habit; it is the custom of the community. And what could be a darker hour than this, asks the thinking Indian who has observed, rightly or wrongly, half-starved, half-naked millions of India living for decades on the verge of death. They felt enslaved by an alien people, and they even saw the tallest among them being humiliated by the petty underlings of a sovereign overseas. Not so conscious of the political and economic issues, the masses were alive to the affronts to their centuries-old culture. They have heard, half-amused and half-indignant, the missionaries of the ruling race calumniating the Hindu gods; they have seen churches rise where once stood their temples. The high caste, the privileged, the upper-crust, noticed the *Mahabharata* being replaced by the *Iliad* on the shelves of seats of learning, and Kalidasa by Shakespeare. The Sanskrit pandit has had to learn an alien tongue to get a job. The aristocrat realized with a deep sense of humiliation that he must give up the costume of his forebears and ape the Europeans in order to earn a respectable living. The Brahmin and the untouchable, the caste and the outcaste, the mass and the class, all alike felt that every insult to their culture was an affront to Mother India.

And consciously or subconsciously they were expectant; they felt that an *Avatara* was imminent. They recalled the promise of the Lord and felt sure that *Kalki* must come to chastise the evil-doers and restore Mother India to her traditional majesty. Men's hearts were ready to receive a Messiah; they were eager to endow someone, as it were, with a halo. The hour was auspicious for the right man to be taken or mistaken for God.

They had to wait for a long while facing the cross-roads. Many a promising personality proved to be a

false alarm. It was about this time that there began to be rumours of a tiny Indian who was fighting in South Africa against a powerful government. What interested the illiterate masses more was the news that he was unarmed though fighting, and that he bade his followers not to raise even a finger against the opponent. The villagers avidly consumed information about this man who was preaching and practising the creed of *Ahimsa*, or non-violence, the gospel that Buddha preached, and Mahavira also.

So when Gandhi returned to India in 1915, he had a ready and eager audience. Curious crowds gathered around him wherever he went. The villagers noticed that Gandhi distrusted the machine and preferred journeys on foot whenever possible. The sight reminded them of the Buddha walking from village to village to spread his gospel, and of thousands of *Yogis* who annually make long journeys on foot to visit sacred shrines. Gandhi's simple life, his passion for truth, his fearlessness, were in keeping with the Indian tradition of the *Mahatma*, the great soul. His vegetarian diet quickened the peculiar Indian belief that all living creatures are sacrosanct. The villagers observed with tacit and peculiarly Indian reverence the fact that Gandhi was leading the life of a *Brahmachari*, a celibate, calling his wife *Ba*, or Mother. They identified him with Mahavira, the Jeena, the conqueror of all the six senses. His loin cloth was reminiscent of *Isa Masih*, the Christ. His use of the *Ramayan-Mahabharata* language and his constant allusions to *Rama Rajya*—the ideal Kingdom of Rama—as India's goal sounded to the multitude like the preachings of ancient *Rishis*. His habit of squatting on the ground invoked before the Indian's eyes the familiar sitting posture of Lord Buddha. It was a great change, indeed, from the galaxy of other contemporary Indian leaders who spoke the alien *Angrezy*, dressed like Europeans, and sat on chairs; here was a man who deliberately neglected

the current routine and who appealed to India's elemental ideals of greatness.

Curious crowds around Gandhi began to assume the form of throngs of devotees. Villagers travelled miles to have a *Darshan*—ceremonial glimpse of Gandhi. Mothers brought their ailing babies to be touched by Gandhi and to be healed. Long queues of peasants waited for a chance to take the dust from his feet, a devotional ceremony, which, after hundreds of performances, left Gandhi's feet almost raw. The city-dwellers, the reporters, the leaders, followed him wherever he went, even to the remotest village. And for the time being, the hamlet where Gandhi pitched his tent became the hub of the nation.

In no time, Gandhi's picture was on the thatched wall of practically every hut in India. His photographs hung in most bungalows of the upper middle class, and his busts in marble and bronze adorned the mansions of industrial tycoons of Bombay, Calcutta, and Ahmedabad. More than one Maharajah ensconced Gandhi's portrait in his private chambers, if not, for discretion's sake, in his reception hall. Penny postcards showed the new hero sitting on the lap of Mother India. Some of the postcard artists portrayed him wielding his spinning wheel after the fashion of Lord Krishna's manipulation of his invincible *Sudarshan Chakra*, or the disc of fire. Other postcards depicted him as he sat in meditation under a tree in the manner of Buddha with a halo around his face. He was shown holding Mount *Govardhana* on his little finger just as Krishna did, so that his farming community, according to the *Puranas*, might be protected and saved from devastating rains. Everywhere he was identified with one of India's past *Avatars*.

Mystical coincidence has played a substantial part in establishing Gandhi as the idol of an abnormally religious people. Early in his career as the leader of the Indian people, when ground was being broken for the

first non-co-operation movement of 1919-1920, a strange story was bandied about, and it helped create Gandhi's reputation as an *Avatara*—incarnation of God—in the eyes of the masses. The incident took place in a tiny village tucked away in the Province of Bihar. In connection with a lecture tour, Gandhi was driving from one village to another on a cart road. An old blind woman had heard that he was to pass by her hamlet, but was not scheduled to stop there. Undaunted, she trudged through the furrowed fields under the scorching tropical sun and stood by the dusty road expecting to hear the whirring of his automobile. Strange to say, when Gandhi's car reached the spot, suddenly a tyre went flat, and its occupants had to alight for a time. Gandhi's eyes fell on the blind woman, and he approached her in humble obeisance. The old creature, perceiving a hand of God in the accident, prostrated herself at Gandhi's feet and wept.

Similar tales have often made headlines in the leading newspapers of the country. Once, for instance, when Gandhi was serving one of his numerous terms of imprisonment, an aged widow in Bardoli, the "Thermopylae of India's non-violent war," dreamed that his spirit pierced the stone walls in order to come and heal her invalid son. Next day the boy was reported to be in normal health. The stories of miraculous healings and of Gandhi's disappearances from jail are endless. The faithful still think the Bihar earthquake was sent by God to chastise the orthodox Hindus who objected to Gandhi's anti-untouchability campaign. Finally, there is the story of the discovery of the most unusual horoscope dealing with Gandhi. In 1930, during the heat of the Civil Disobedience Campaign, a southern Brahmin astrologer announced the finding of a long-sought document, mentioned in the *Puranas*, which he believed to be centuries old. When its contents were made public in the national press, the entire populace shook its head over what

seemed to be an ancient heralding of Gandhi's coming and his exploits on this earth. The eventual victory of Gandhi and of Satyagraha was also a part of the prediction. The Indian public, moreover, is always hearing from "notable astrologers" who forecast nationalist victories for Gandhi on the eve of a political contest. Naturally, the public remembers only those few forecasts, which, according to the statistical law of probability, have come true.

The deification of Gandhi, however, is the act of a people born and bred in the *Avatara* tradition, and is not Gandhi's own *mazoeuvre*. The canonization has come unsought. The halo has been added by the masses and is not of Gandhi's own manufacture. His emergence as a prophet of the Indian people—or as a *charismatic* leader, to use Max Weber's concept—out of a politician pure and simple has been nurtured by the peculiar faiths, traditions, and beliefs of the multitudes. Customs and beliefs, however unsound and unscientific they may be, have a capacity for moulding attitudes and for producing social action, hence their sociological reality. They can neither be ignored nor rendered ineffective. Consequently, Gandhi, the Mahatma, the result of mass psychology, is as significant, as Gandhi, the statesman, the result of his individual nature and nurture. It was people's hearts, no doubt, that enshrined him under a halo; but it was also a truism that his consequent prophetic role in turn endowed the straight-forward political struggle of the Indians with the richness and profundity of a great social movement. What is more significant, even Gandhi himself cannot have it otherwise. All his efforts at divesting himself of the halo, of ceasing to be a Mahatma, have failed utterly. In spite of all of his denials of divinity and confessions of moral lapses, he continues to be worshipped as a deity by the masses.

This faith in Gandhi's divine mission is so deeply imbedded in the psychology of the man-in-the-street that to him truth and "Gandhi says so" have come to be

synonymous. They refuse to hear words to the contrary, however legitimate and justified the other side may be. To impale Gandhi spells the ruin of a newspaper, for the circulation tends to dwindle down without the help of censorship or storm troopers. The *Hindustan* of Bombay suffered from this intangible reader-censorship in 1930. Even the *Times of India*, one of the most powerful Anglo-Indian newspapers largely subscribed to by Europeans and pro-government clerkdom, had to change its tone when it felt the unmistakable effects of the spontaneous boycott of the people.

The belief in Gandhi's infallibility is strongest in the villages. To the villagers, there are only two camps in India! *Gandhi-wallahs* and *Sirkar* (the government); and the latter, of course, is wrong. Traditionally suspicious of strangers, the villagers receive you with abundant hearts and open doors if a "Gandhi-cap" slants across your brow. Gandhi's name is the best currency in the hands of Congress propagandists, for the illiterate masses, unable to understand the intricacies of politico-economic issues, just "know by instinct" that what Gandhi advocates is in their own interest.

In attributing a prophetic role to Gandhi, however, the multitudes were not entirely unearthly in their inspiration. Their devotion has a solid foundation in Gandhi's own ascetic and self-sacrificing character. As already pointed out, it was Gandhi's *charisma* which demanded obedience; it was Gandhi's own behaviour pattern that inspired the masses to endow him, as it were, with a halo. Gandhi became a god to them precisely because he reminded them of God-like personalities from India's past. What appealed to them most was the streamlined, utilitarian version of saintliness that Gandhi was displaying before their very eyes. For he is not the traditional *Yogi* withdrawn to a cave in the Himalayas, and even the most blind *Yogi* devotee knows that at times the needs of our complex civilization are beyond

the influence of a man of meditation alone. The multitudes approve of Gandhi as a man of action, a twentieth century Mahatma, one who can tackle political, social and economic problems and handle politicians adroitly. They have seen him in his workaday life, doing the same things as they do, but with an unusual twist which to them appears *charismatic*, or superhuman.

The *charismatic* quality is exemplary—something to be imitated as a duty. Gandhi's role as an ideal leader, therefore, is significant. People have an entirely new conception of leadership since Gandhi's advent on the political scene. Formerly brilliancy, a glib command of English, a comfortable bank account, noble birth and the stamp of Oxford or Cambridge were the assets that made a leader in India. Today the tables are turned. A man with these accoutrements has to strive against heavy odds if he hopes to rank now. Instead, a leader has to be simple, preferably in loin cloth; for Gandhi is so. He must have a long record of suffering at the hands of the British and he must have sacrificed all he had; for that is what Gandhi has been through. He must be fearless, like Gandhi, and must know how to speak in the people's tongue. Gandhi's vegetarian diet is also a fashion to the point of a requirement, and many a meat-loving Mohammedan and Hindu leader has changed the eating habits of a lifetime. Gandhi's moral code is inflexible and has doubtless pinched more than one carbon-copy leader. The writer has heard murmurs of dislike against even Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, whose popularity is second only to Gandhi's, because he indulges in an occasional cigarette. The change is complete. The entire Congress organization is studded now with little Mahatmas. The erstwhile natural leaders, mostly England-returned lawyers, are left waiting on the roadside while illiterate, low-caste but determined and sincere village-workers march to the full glory of the Congress high command.

Added to Gandhi's *charisma* are all the attributes of

a "model." As an originator of fashions, Gandhi can well be the envy of Hollywood stars. For there can be no competitor in India when he sets the tempo and the pace. Early in his career in India, about 1916, he used to wear a shirt instead of a plain loin cloth. Once, just by accident, the collar button of his shirt was seen open in one of his photographs. Open collars became the order of the day from then on. The white headgear, introduced by Gandhi, shaped and tipped over one eye much like the U.S. Army's "overseas cap," has become so popular that nearly every man in India owns at least one; officially they are the insignia of Gandhi sympathizers. High blood pressure is now the most fashionable and common ailment in the upper-crust India, for Gandhi suffers from it occasionally.

Gandhi's *charisma* is admitted even by his adversaries. His guileless and transparent personality makes him lovable even when fought against, and respected when denounced. As far back as a quarter of a century ago, General Smuts, to take one instance, while imprisoning Gandhi in South Africa, confessed that the proper procedure should have been the other way around, and that he would have committed the same "treason" had he been in Gandhi's shoes. Completely won over, the General himself went to the prison to negotiate with the Indian leader and signed a pact. "I get," remarked Gandhi, "the best bargains from behind prison bars." A decade later, Gandhi was again arraigned in a law court, this time before an English judge in India. While sentencing Gandhi, who had by then become a "Mahatma," to six years' imprisonment, the judge observed: "If the course of events should make it possible for the Government to reduce the period and release you, no one will be better pleased than I."

This same honest-to-goodness quality of Gandhi's is largely responsible for the frequent invitations he receives

from the Viceregal Palace. Attired as usual in his homespun loin cloth, Gandhi has been frequently seen climbing the steps of the Viceroy's lodge in the past few months to confer with His Majesty's highest representative in India, thus re-enacting a scene which, back in 1931, annoyed Winston Churchill to such a degree that the Englishman was quoted as saying: "The picture of that half-naked fakir ascending the Viceregal Palace makes me mad." Mr. Churchill is justified in detecting some incongruity in the picture, for when his Excellency the Viceroy invites Gandhi to his Delhi palace to make his "personal acquaintance," he invites an "old rebel" who has pledged himself to throw the British out of India.

How is this possible—the Western mind wonders. Why do the avowed political enemies of Gandhi succumb to him personally? Why do the British show these spasmodic outbursts of affability and respect toward a man they have so often imprisoned and tried to frustrate?

The explanation for these frequent "love-feasts" among the enemies should be looked for in Gandhi's own personality. He fights non-violently, without injuring his opponent, and he has a childlike, toothless, disarming laughter.

Gandhi's formula for disarming his adversaries and quelling opposition is embodied in the hackneyed aphorism: "Love thy enemy." It is characteristic of a *charismatic* leader that he neither treats his opponents as persons possessing different values and different viewpoints nor as enemies; rather he treats those who resist him or ignore him as delinquent in duty. His attitude seems to proclaim, as it were: They haven't seen the light as yet, but there is still hope for them. Those who have observed Gandhi's methods at close range know that, like the lawyer and soldier he is, he follows a carefully planned procedure, and that each new dissenter is a challenge to his skill. His first manoeuvre, when an *impasse* arises, is to cease public utterances and controversy through the printed word. Instead he seeks a personal

interview with the opponent or spokesman of the opposition, as the case may be. Being an exceedingly gracious person, his first inquiries during the intimate meeting are after the opponent's health and his family's; he knows and remembers every name of any consequence to his adversary. With the amenities out of the way, he turns to a lengthy review of the past when both of them worked shoulder to shoulder and admired each other—Gandhi's way of emphasizing with all his persuasive power the fundamental unity underlying their temporary differences. But even at this point, Gandhi does not broach the issue; he lets his opponent air his grievances first. It is then that Gandhi lets loose a barrage of logical arguments with all the ease acquired while practising law. Finally he convinces his adversary that both parties have the same end in view, and their only differences lie in their ways of gaining this mutual objective. The straightening out of these little residual differences Gandhi leaves for the inevitable next interview. But as it is expected, in most cases when the adversary comes to see Gandhi again, he is in fine shape for the final adjustment of minor points.

It is possible that Gandhi is conscious of his own charm. In countless instances when he has found himself in a tight place, he has contrived to interview his critic or antagonist personally. In the majority of these encounters, his disarming smile and penetrating eyes have saved the day for him. On the eve of his recent interview with Mr. Jinnah, the Moslem communalist leader, for instance, he declared on April 23, 1938, "We are friends, not strangers. It does not matter to me that we see things from different angles of vision." The power of Gandhi's *personal touch method* in politics is now so widely recognized that many an adversary, eager to keep up the controversy, seeks to avoid seeing him personally. Thus when Gandhi, in 1932, announced his preference for being Winston Churchill's house guest in England during the Second Round Table Conference, Mr. Churchill was rumpored to have demurred.

Once, when a communalist Mohammedan lawyer was fomenting the Moslem League against Gandhi's National Congress, some friends suggested to the Moslem leader that he should see Gandhi in an effort to end the controversy. The Mohammedan declined the suggestion with the remark: "I will never do that. I am afraid Gandhi will convert me to his own viewpoint."

The select group around Gandhi would inform you, if somewhat hesitatingly, that Gandhi's personal touch method (called the "human touch" by the Marquis of Zetland, who framed the new India Act) was one of the chief reasons for the great nationalist victory of 1931. After the bitter nation-wide fight of 1930, Lord Irwin, "the Christian Viceroy," as Gandhi dubbed him, released Gandhi from one of His Majesty's numerous prisons and invited the erstwhile ward of the state to the Viceregal lodge for negotiations. At one o'clock on a moonlight night, Lord Irwin and Gandhi signed the treaty since famous as the "Gandhi-Irwin Pact." The Viceroy urged the "half-naked fakir" to pose for a joint photograph in celebration of the event, but Gandhi refused since he never poses before a camera. When the Viceroy offered a mild drink to his ascetic guest, Gandhi asked for a glass of water instead. Then from the folds of his loin cloth, he slyly pulled out a neat little package. In it was some of the "contraband salt" which had just landed sixty thousand men and thirty thousand women in jail. Gandhi diluted a pinch of the salt in a glass of water extended to him and drank it. Thus Gandhi literally "proved his salt" and a roar of laughter from the Indian and the Briton cemented the pact which paved the way for the new constitution. Later, Gandhi paid a call on Lady Irwin and admonished her to spare half an hour a day for his spinning wheel programme.

Yet this unarmed little ninety pounds of humanity is terrifying at times. The mightiest empire of our day is appalled when he threatens to give the signal for one

of his civil disobedience campaigns. 'He is more feared than a nation in arms. The writer personally remembers when some two hundred police headed by British inspectors and a magistrate arrested him after two months of the Civil Disobedience Campaign of 1930. Evidently fearing the worst, they came in the dead of the night to remove the Mahatma while his country slept. Although the men and women with Gandhi shared his views on violence, the police watched them leerily. The Bombay Mail was halted in a jungle between two stations so that the prisoner could be put aboard without attracting attention. With his never-failing poise, Gandhi asked the English magistrate to read the warrant for his arrest. The Englishman trembled as he obeyed, and his voice failed him twice. The inspectors squinted at their watches nervously while resting their free hands on their revolvers. But, unperturbed, Gandhi had eyes only for his people. Sitting there under the stars, he asked his saddened little band to give him his favourite music—the song of the ideal man who is detached alike in bliss and sorrow. At the close of the chant, Gandhi stepped lightly into the patrol wagon, leaving a surprised inspector to follow him. We asked the Mahatma for a message to his wife. "She is a brave girl," he said, and with that they sped him away.

This terrible meekness of Gandhi is often akin to a peculiar kind of arrogance—a psychic complex arising from his dead surety of purpose combined with his Oriental fatalism and a living faith in the doctrine that truth triumphs eventually. In a way, Gandhi's self-confidence is a further manifestation of his revolutionary *charisma*—a *It is written—but I say unto you* type of phenomenon. At the time of the Karachi Congress, a band of Communists demonstrated against him and tried to injure him physically. In an open meeting in the evening, attended by half a million people, he laughed at the incident and declared, if I remember his words correctly: "I keep no bodyguard to protect me. My chest is literally bare. Yet no one can

kill me. For my bodyguard is no less a person than God Almighty." A few months later a bomb was thrown on his car in Poona. No serious damage was done. Immediately afterwards, however, he announced that from then on he would ordinarily not use an automobile so that future assassins would have fewer obstacles in their path. A bullock cart has been his official means of transportation ever since. Another incident came to me from a revered teacher who was a prison companion of Gandhi's in the Yeravda Central Jail. Once he begged Gandhi to take more food and to be more careful about his health. And here is Gandhi's reply, reported in my friend's language: "I am taking good care of my body. I feel as responsible as a pregnant woman. God in His infinite mercy has chosen, it seems to me, that I be instrumental in bringing forth India's freedom. I, therefore, cannot afford to die as yet."

A gift for the "personal touch," which has brought to Gandhi so many notable victories in public affairs, is but an extension of his mannerisms in private life. For one thing, Gandhi never forgets a face or a name, a quality often associated in America with President Roosevelt and James A. Farley. The doors of his hut, a moving workshop, which travels from Kashmir to Cape Comorin, and from Bombay to Burma, are always open to all sorts of visitors. Any tongue-tied villager can see him, even at midnight, after the tradition of India's past great Emperor Jahangir. The pressure of work compels him to receive foreign correspondents while taking his austere meals or even while lying in his bath. He generally sleeps four hours out of the twenty-four, perhaps today in a speeding train and tomorrow in a jiggling automobile *en route* from village to village.

The writer distinctly remembers seeing him one morning early in 1930, blot his signature on the second Ultimatum to the Viceroy with one flourish of his hand, and with the next start a letter to an untouchable girl of ten in his Retreat five hundred miles away, inquiring whether she

had applied iodine to her smashed finger. During his second sojourn in the Yeravda Jail, he used to write a hundred and six letters weekly on the blank corners of newspapers to the inmates of his *Ashrama*, and this correspondence was over and above his usual mountainous daily mail. He resorted to newspapers because it hurt him to use the prison stationery which was "supplied at the expense of the poor Indian taxpayer."

Gandhi's "personal touch" can be a shade ironic, particularly with his nearest and dearest. This genial and humane friend of the people at large is the most exacting of taskmasters when he deals with those who are closest to him. Any member of Gandhi's intimate circle will tell you that in order to have the privilege of living with him, a man or a woman must be prepared to sink with him into a veritable ocean of self-sacrifice. One of them was overheard to say that "dancing on the edge of a sword" was easy compared to winning the Mahatma's individual approbation. Gandhi never allows anybody to do any menial labour solely for him. But the individual who is entrusted with his simple garments is apt to be publicly rebuked if they are not sent back in good repair and immaculate. One of the rules of his co-operative Retreat is that no member can have personal belongings. Once his wife, "Moti" to the multitude of India, innocently hoarded the huge sum of twenty-five rupees (about \$10,000) for what seemed to her to be a worthy purpose. When Gandhi came to know about it, he exposed his wife in a long article published in his weekly *Young India* under the title "My shame, my sorrow," and went on a three day fast!

A story which gives further proof of Gandhi's exactions upon those he loves reaches us while this is being written. It concerns one Sardar Prithvising, a so-called terrorist who contracted revolutionary ideology during a sojourn in Canada and California in his early days. Some time after his return to India, he was arrested in 1915, in connection with the Lahore Conspiracy Case, and deported for life.

When part of his sentence had been carried out in the notorious Andaman Islands, he was brought back to India to pass the rest of it in the Rajmahendri prison. Strange as it may seem, he managed to escape from the jail in 1922, and successfully eluded the vigilant eye of the secret service for the next sixteen years. What is stranger still, on May 18th, 1938, he visited Gandhi, confessed his distrust of violence, and declared himself to be ready to join the ranks of the Mahatma's non-violent army. Failing to see any evidence of criminal conduct in his career, Gandhi promised to help him, but only on the condition that the fugitive from justice first give himself up to the proper authorities. For there can be, according to Gandhi, no secrecy in Satyagraha and no withholding of truth. To this proposal Sardar Prithvising unhesitatingly agreed. Thereupon Gandhi invited the police superintendent of Bombay to his residence in order to take charge of the newest convert to non-violence. Satisfied now with his youngest disciple's readiness to pass through the fire of reincarceration to remove any trace of dross, the Mahatma is leaving no stone unturned in order to have the ex-revolutionist freed. He has started a spirited correspondence with the Viceroy of India, pleading for the Sardar's immediate release. "I would like to have," Gandhi told his much-impressed public, "a man like him as my companion in these last years of my life."

Yet, strict though he is with his friends, he is far less lenient with himself. Perhaps the following is the best example to illustrate how completely Gandhi lives for his cause. The world of self-entertainment is as remote to him as Coney Island is to St. Helena. One day during his last visit to London, his secretary, much amused, carried to him a visiting card bearing the name of Charles Chaplin. Whereupon Gandhi, in all sincerity, inquired: "And who might that distinguished gentleman be?"

Neither Gandhi's *charisma* nor the charm of his personality, however, would have been enough to have

made him the "sole representative" of the Indian people that he has become, or to have kept him on his lofty pinnacle all these years. There are *Yogis* and *Gurus* galore in India, and some have greater claims on saintliness than Gandhi. In the second place, it is not hard to find, as every tourist knows, Indian people of great charm, with winning, disarming personalities. But neither these *Gurus*, respected as they are by the people, nor the persons of irresistible charm have succeeded in becoming what Gandhi has become—"the only man who can deliver the goods" in India. That is because Gandhi is more than a pious man and an appealing person; he is a politician as well. Added to his prophetic role and his charming personality is something which integrates all other sides of his nature—the strength which comes from a prudent policy. And it is this triple combination—the Mahatma, "everybody's *Bapu*" (daddy), and political strategist—that has made Gandhi.

Before Gandhi's appearance in the Indian political mosaic, the nationalist movement consisted of a few organizations formed from India's wealthier class whose sole function was to bicker mildly with the government when the latter drastically violated the former's vested interests. Their protests and petitions, however, were impotent because there was no sanction behind them. The great masses were still untouched, and in this lay an inexhaustible store, as it were, of human energy. Any man who could unleash that energy and mould it into concerted social action was destined to be *The Leader*. The politician in Gandhi met historical necessity with his practical programme of Satyagraha.

As pointed out elsewhere, it was humanly impossible for India to rise in an armed revolt against the British government. Britain cannot be beaten, Gandhi maintained, at her own game. Even a network of secret terrorist societies cannot bring the government down, for the very fact that it must remain underground would prevent its

organization on a nation-wide scale. To lead the masses of the nation into action, the movement should be at once dynamic and legitimate. The writer still remembers very distinctly Gandhi's solemn figure, with eyes half closed, addressing a multitude of people assembled for the evening prayer on the eve of his famous March to the Sea. He began with these words: "The very fact that you all are here this evening, in spite of your expressed determination to overthrow the existing order, shows that my method is the only way out. Had we entered on our programme a small item, say, such as slapping a representative of the bureaucracy, we would have been prevented even from assembling here this evening. But we are out to invite suffering, and not to inflict it. And hence the disability of the government to suppress us legally."

He offered his programme of non-violent direct action to the restless masses and with it his challenge that it could lead to their political freedom. The people were ready to resort to plans that sounded only half as good. What is more significant, what Gandhi said was written in their scriptures. So it ruffled their traditional springs of emotion.

Gandhi stretched his realism up to the daily bread of the toiling masses. What his Satyagraha would do for their political needs, his *spinning wheel programme* would accomplish for their economic desperation. The people that Gandhi had to deal with were, to quote his own phrases, semi-starved, half-naked, illiterate and superstitious. A hundred and fifty years of servitude and a systematic humiliation of their culture and creed had left them human wrecks in body and mind, lacking in self-confidence. Gandhi's problem, therefore, was two-fold, namely, economic relief and mental regeneration. First, he had to give them bread in order that, in the second place, he could shake them out of their "slave mentality."

Had he favoured industrialization on a large scale as the remedy for India's economic distress, he might have

added to the coffers of the fortunate few who have a common cause with the government in exploiting the masses. This might also have given employment to the urban population, and enriched the middle class of a few towns and cities that can easily be counted on the fingers. But India is a vast continent, and 85 % of its population eke out a hand-to-mouth existence in the 730,000 villages scattered over its entire area, the majority of them being far away from a railroad station. The whole rural population is occupationally agricultural and leads an idle life for at least half of the year for lack of any side-industry. Apart from the fact that there is no capital to raise big industrial plants, to save the wasting of such a mighty mass of human energy was a great economy in itself. Keenly aware of this, it was Gandhi's common sense and native insight which led him to launch his programme for the revival of cottage industries, with the spinning wheel as the symbol of the movement, and the actual means to its success. Thus, figuratively, Gandhi became identified with the dispensing end of a vast bread-line of semi-starved thousands whose average income is not more than \$3.60 per month.

The politician Gandhi has a natural gift for the unusual and the startling. He wanted to identify himself with the poverty-stricken masses. His curious effort in that direction manifest itself in the devolution of his dress. From tiptop and up-to-date European suits, he has passed through a shirt and a *dhotti* stage, and terminated at a loin cloth. For he should not put on more than what his poor compatriots can afford. Luxuries of the Maharajahs at his disposal, his simple food consists mainly of dates and curds. And of all the animals in the world, he prefers a goat's milk. The dish for every meal is the same battered, tin object which he brought with him out of one of His Majesty's prisons. He travels always in a third-class compartment when on a railway train, and on deck when aboard a ship.

He inaugurated his anti-untouchability campaign by adopting an untouchable girl as his daughter. On his last visit to London in connection with the second Round Table Conference, he rejected Royal hospitality and put up with the poorest people of London in the East End, where he won the title of "Uncle Gandhi" from the poor children who flocked around him during his early morning walks and evening prayers. Invited to Buckingham Palace as His Majesty's guest, he walked about in his loin cloth with as much detachment as he had shown as a guest in the untouchable quarters back in India. When he has to concentrate on writing, he does not retreat to a seashore "cottage," but observes a day of silence instead.

These things do make news, and there are many critics who see in them Gandhi's flair for the colourful and the histrionic. Some men go further and accuse Gandhi of deliberately exploiting the weaknesses of an abnormally religious people by doing what in other countries would have led him to the cross or the lunatic asylum. None, however, doubts the sincerity of his purpose, and it is agreed on all hands that the *Swaraj* movement owes its most to the Mahatma—a triple combination of saint, person of exquisite charm, and shrewd politician. Perhaps each great social movement in history owes its most to its respective *charismatic* leader.

Always on the threshold of Godhood, Gandhi has, however, consistently and emphatically denied any divine power. Perhaps no one has a better chance of being accepted as a modern Buddha, a Christ, or a Mohammed. But the so-called *Saint of Sabramati* has left no stone unturned in order to block the genesis of "*Gandhism*," which might easily find some two hundred million believers at the very onset. Here is a typical story of the man who refuses a halo in spite of unprecedented lures and possibilities—a story eye-witnessed by the author:

In June, 1930, Gandhi and his so-called "First Batch" of civil resisters were camping in a microscopic village

called Karadi in the Gujarat District.¹ Gandhi was putting up in a bamboo hut, especially constructed for him in a mango grove. The salt movement was in full swing, and the entire nation was being directed from these unpretentious headquarters. .

One morning a group of villagers came to Gandhi's hut in a procession—women leading the little column with triumphant songs. A band of musicians in the rear was regulating the tempo of the march. The men were bearing fruits and flowers and bags of money. They approached Gandhi with piety, and placed the offerings reverently at his feet.

"Our village well—" faltered the spokesman of the delegation in answer to Gandhi's penetrating glance—"our village well was without water for these many years. Your sanctifying footprints touched our soil yesterday, and lo, today the well is full of water. We pray to Thee——"

"You are fools!" was Gandhi's caustic interruption. "Beyond a doubt, it was a coincidence. I have no more influence with God than you have." Then the severe expression in Gandhi's face gave way to a fatherly smile. He patiently began to explain away the mystery, using homely analogies which could be understood by these illiterate villagers:

"Suppose, a crow sits on a palm tree at the moment when the tree falls to the ground! Would you think that the weight of the bird caused the tree's uprooting? Go back!" commanded the tiny man on a palm leaf mattress, "and instead of thinking about such silly accidents, utilize your time in spinning and weaving cloth to clothe Mother India."

Gandhi, whose career owes much to miraculous accidents, thus denies himself the most supreme accident that can ever happen to a mortal—that of becoming a Son of God, of being the founder of a new faith.

CHAPTER IX

DIRECT ACTION: A WAY OUT

I. SATYAGRAHA: A GROUP TECHNIQUE

IN ITS HISTORIC form, the doctrine of non-violence, which underlies and conditions the elaborate present-day system of Satyagraha, was purely an individual pursuit. Its most notable manifestation was the Hindu theory of *Yoga*. The Rishis of ancient India, who practised one of the four *Yogas*, made a habit of relentless spiritual and physical discipline. Their immediate objective was to cultivate absolute aloofness from worldly affairs. They also aimed to reach a state wherein the unkind vagaries of nature could not affect them. As a result they actually surmounted the feelings of pain and pleasure. They were detached alike in bliss and sorrow, since both these states of mind are born of man's likes and dislikes. The *Rishis'* detachment not only immunized them from the conflicts in their communities and the hardships imposed by natural phenomena, but it also insured them against harming any living creature.

A later variety of the *Rishis'* philosophy is to be heard in the classical period from the lips of the Greek Stoics, and there are scholars who believe that Stoicism was influenced to a considerable extent by the older credo of India's forest-dwelling mystics. The "wiseman" of Stoic conception was lord of himself and subject to no one. Imperturbable in the face of reward and retribution alike, he could rise above pleasure and pain, and was consequently master of every situation.

The practice of both the Hindu and the Stoic philosophies was the prerogative of only a few gifted individuals.

The Hindu routine was a kind of personal-religion, whereas the Greek system was a form of individual-cynicism. There was no explicit idea of attaining social ends through this *Yogic* practice of not injuring another human being by thought or deed. There was, however, the implicit conjecture that if a fairly representative number of people did likewise, there would be no conflict in society, since all wrongs spring from man's "interestedness." What was only an implicit idea in the olden days is turned into a positive force in modern India under Gandhi's guidance. The Indian Satyagraha movements of 1919 and 1930 have demonstrated that after all, "The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the *Rishis* and Saints. It is meant for the common people as well."¹ From then on, the study of Satyagraha leaves the confines of religion and theology and falls within the province of a "sociology of conflict" or a "sociology of struggle."²

2. NATURE OF SOCIAL CONFLICT

Struggle presupposes a conflict, and conflict has never been long absent in the history of the human race. The old Sanskrit dictum that "Life feeds itself upon life" is

¹ M. K. Gandhi, in *Young India*, August 11, 1920.

² It is well to point out here the two main difficulties of the undertaking. In the first place, like all Hindu thinkers, Gandhi generally uses religious or theological phraseology, even when dealing with the most mundane matters. That is the genius of the Hindu art of expression. A necessary preliminary, therefore, will be to ferret out the demonstrable generalizations that many times underlie Gandhi's declarations of faith. Secondly, Gandhi has never stated his theory of non-violent resistance in a sustained fashion. He is primarily a man of action and not a theorist. There is a distinct absence of previous theorizing behind Gandhi's Indian movement. Here the Mahatma resembles other popular leaders of his time, especially Mussolini. For the latter confesses in his essay, *The Political and Social Doctrine of Fascism*, a recent attempt to decipher his system, that Fascism "had always been a doctrine of action." There is, however, one fundamental difference between these two contemporary leaders of the masses. Under the influence of Machiavelli's ruthless doctrine, Mussolini developed a sort of opportunism in the working out of Fascism. Gandhi, on the other hand, conditioned all his activities by the principles of non-violence and truth. Consequently, he had an *a priori* means-end relationship which is not to be found in any of the other modern systems, not even in the elaborate and carefully wrought doctrine of socialism.³

among the earliest attestations of the fact. The Zend-Avesta also states that the history of the world is the history of conflict between the contending forces of good and evil. The same idea is implied in Heraclitus's famous aphorism: "War is the father of all things." In the nineteenth century the theory of conflict underwent a fundamental modulation, first under the influence of Charles Darwin and later of Herbert Spencer. Darwin's biological formula, especially, imparted a halo of scientific finality to the conditioning character of the "struggle for existence" in the evolution of the species. He perceived that the struggle for existence among the species operated as a mode of natural selection by which the undesirable was eliminated and the more fit sustained. His contribution was mainly based on his observation of lower life. J. Novicow and G. Tarde went even further and maintained that there is also a struggle for existence among the atoms, the planets, the stars and the molecules. The underlying principle here, as in the case of the later sociological interpretation of Darwin's theory, is the basic notion that as there are contending elements in nature, so there are conflicting ideals and interests among men.

Gandhi, too, observes "repulsion enough in Nature." But Gandhi differs radically from the neo-Darwinian sociologists when it comes to his explanation for conflict in the physical as well as in the human world. To Darwin, struggle is the fundamental law of the universe, the implication being that conflict is a constant phenomenon and the cause of evolution. Darwin, no doubt, takes cognizance of the element of co-operation, and uses the term "struggle for existence" in a large and metaphorical sense. The whole stress of his thesis, however, is on the process of struggle, and he has all but ignored the unifying element of co-operation as a factor in the evolution of the species. A natural, if not entirely legitimate, result of the Darwinian system, therefore, is the later militarist interpretation of the theory. Some of the followers of

Darwin, notably Karl Pearson, see "Selection as something which renders the inexorable law of heredity a source of progress, which produces the good through suffering, an infinitely greater good which far outbalances the very obvious pain and evil."¹ The evident suggestion in this line of thinking is that we should regard all scientific and humanitarian efforts to mitigate social conflict as not only uncalled for but even harmful. It is an exhortation to us that "if we once realize that this law of inheritance is as inevitable as the law of gravitation, we shall cease to struggle against it."² According to Karl Pearson, the ideal attitude is to let nature take its course.

At this point Gandhi stands in sharp contrast with those who regard struggle as the fundamental law of creation. To him, struggle is neither a ceaseless process of evolution, nor a universal phenomenon. Conflicts, which cause all struggles, are but unfortunate moments in the history of the human race. As such, they are relatively unimportant in the course of the life of human society. "Though there is repulsion enough in Nature," Gandhi writes, "she *lives* by attraction. Mutual love enables Nature to persist. Man does not live by destruction. Self-love compels regard for others. Nations cohere, because there is mutual regard among the individuals composing them. Some day we must extend the national law to the universe, even as we have extended the family law to form nations—a larger family."³ Apparently Gandhi perceives a fundamental unity in the universe and in society which sustains order and life. Prince Kropotkin, the Russian biologist, was led to similar conclusions from his observations of insect and animal life in the jungles of Central Asia. His doctrine of "mutual aid," which is based on compilations of evidence from the same field of investigation as that of Darwin, is in

¹ Karl Pearson in *Sociology and Social Progress*, compiled by Thomas Nixton Carver, New York, 1905, p. 395.

² *Ibid.*, p. 393.

³ *Young India*, 2nd of March, 1928.

harmony with Gandhi's perception of the fundamental unity of all existence. According to this view, conflicts are only irregularities in the order of things, or brief squalls in the even flow of life. In any event, conflicts should be treated as a doctor treats diseases. In the event of a conflict, therefore, the contending parties (in the absence of an umpire) should try to bring about their own reconciliation. Failing in that, they should compel each other to make adjustments in order to re-establish harmony of understanding in a world of unity—a world only temporarily asunder.

The fact should be borne in mind, however, that Gandhi acknowledges "repulsion enough in Nature." According to an old Indian proverb, "There are as many points of view as there are heads." As long as human beings remain what they are, the social scientist should not lose track of the possibility of conflict. In respect to this Gandhi differs from Karl Marx who envisages the absence of conflict in a classless society. There is no guarantee, it can be argued, that there will not be Stalins and Trotskys with their respective camps even after the complete liquidation of the bourgeoisie. For the roots of "interestedness" seem to go deeper than class. They are in the very nature of man. Gandhi also differs from those Utopians who dream of a race of supermen, all unsusceptible to personal gains. He takes ample cognizance of man's tendency toward self-interest and, consequently, stresses the necessity of a permanent institution or instrument to deal with the inevitable, though sporadic, social conflict.

3. HUMAN NATURE

However, it is one thing to recognize the element of selfishness in man, and quite another to label it "Human Nature" as does neo-Darwinism in its final analysis. As a famous theologian recently remarked, our conception of human nature almost invariably colours our mental

constructs. Therefore, the militarist naturally finds in Darwinism a hundred per cent justification of his own view of human relationship. But human nature is a far greater thing than one particular tendency or interest, instinct or drive, whatever you like to call it. It is of a kaleidoscopic nature, this mentality of a bio-social organism. It is comprised of diverse and conflicting tendencies, and to describe human nature in terms of an inflexible desire is utterly inadequate. Self-protection and altruism, love and hate, are all part of it. Man's reactions vary in accordance with whatever phase of his mentality has been invoked. An individual is far more than his one particular motive or deed. He may at some time assume an entirely anti-social attitude, or do something which will disturb the equilibrium of society. Still he is capable of re-establishing himself again as a creative member of society. For he is more than what he did or what he thought, and hence other sides of his mentality are subject to stimulation from within as well as from without.¹ That is what Gandhi means when he says:

"Man and his deeds are two distinct things. Whereas a good deed should call forth approbation and a wicked deed disapprobation, the doer of the deed, whether good or wicked, always deserves respect or pity as the case may be. Hate the sin, and not the sinner is a precept which, though easy to understand, is rarely practised and that is why the poison of hatred spread in the world."²

And again:

"It is quite proper to resist and attack a system, but to attack and resist the author is tantamount to resisting and attacking oneself. For we are all tarred with the

¹ The plurality of the human *psyche* had one of its first and greatest exponents in Buddha whose humanistic teachings include the well-known lines: "Mind is the cause of one's bondage or emancipation; one is one's own friend as well as one's own foe."

² *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. II, p. 53.

same brush, and are children of one and the same Creator, and as such the divine powers within us are infinite. To slight a single human being is to slight those divine powers, and thus to harm not only that human being, but with him the whole world.”¹

When filtered from their religious message, the Indian thinker's words stress the paradoxical existence of both individuality and “sociality” in the human *psyche*. They also point out that if the social side of man's nature is invoked, the tendency of sociality is capable of prevailing in the end. The very existence of society makes this a commonplace truth. Nevertheless, there are occasions when man's selfish interest in one or many individuals may precipitate a conflict. It is with this phenomenon that we, as social scientists, should be prepared to cope.

4. WAR: ITS EXCESSES

The history of mankind is replete with innumerable conflicts. The ways by which men have tried to settle disputes born of their clashing interests and ideals have also been numerous. They range from massacres to saintly forgiveness. However, social patterns for the solution of conflict conveniently fall within one or the other of two broad categories. The techniques for settling feuds and disputes are either based on physical force or on pressure other than physical. In short, the various patterns for solving conflicts have been either violent or non-violent. To fully evaluate Satyagraha, one of the least understood of these techniques, we must compare and contrast the Indian method with the other means used in settling conflicts.

“War” is the symbolic expression for the “violent” method of adjusting disputes. “The term war,” according to the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, “is gener-

¹ *The Story of My Experiments with Truth*, Vol. II, p 54.

ally applied to armed conflicts between groups conceived of as organic unity. . . ." It is also used to cover sundry other types of struggle in which physical force is employed. Our chief concern here, however, is with war as a permanent institution, and as a mode of social action to solve disputes by the adoption of physical force. War as such, apart from the moral or immoral character of a particular war in history, has been offered the highest praise that the mind of man can concoct. It has also been the subject of blistering criticism and condemnation. Either extreme view can be discarded, but the fact will remain that today the consensus of opinion throughout the world is against the horrors of war. The tremendous destruction of human life and property, of tillable soil and natural resources caused by war, takes away the lust for violence of even those who directly precipitate battles. Today, moreover, war is more pervasive, and consequently, all the more destructive than in the past. Improvements in transportation and communication, coupled with the international character of modern economy, tend to make modern war more universal in its effects than ever before in history. Nationally, the distinction between the armed forces and the civil population has been entirely obliterated. In war-time, today, whole populations are put on a war footing. It is no longer possible, as it was in the past, for armies to pummel each other without disturbing the equilibrium of civil society. Lately wars are being fought not only by armies in the trenches but by the whole populace back on the "home front" as well. Consequently modern warfare demands a tremendous price without giving enough good in return to counterbalance the sacrifice. That war is destructive and wasteful has become almost irrefragable.

To the average citizen, the undesirability of war is grounded on humanitarianism, morality, or religion. More damaging objections come from sociological investigations. For one reason, the selective function of war has been

considered negative by such eminent scholars as Spencer, Darwin, Novicow, Nicholai, and D. S. Jordan. Referring to Greece and Rome, O. Seeck points out that the main reason for their decay is to be found in the extermination of the best blood through wars. D. S. Jordan and H. E. Jordan, in their book, *War's Aftermath*, come to similar conclusions after studying the effect of the American Civil War on the State of Virginia. Yet it is curious to note that most of these experts do not champion pacifism.

The second line of argument against war hinges on the effect of armed conflict on the health of the population. The spread of venereal diseases among soldiers, the question of wounded men who return physically unfit to sire healthy progeny, and the emergence of epidemics such as influenza, which swept through all the belligerent nations as well as their neighbours at the close of the World War, are part of modern warfare's grim sequels. The tremendous increase in the death rate with the beginning of war casts dangerous repercussions on the life of the populace. It affects the marriage rate; and, consequently, the birth rate. And when the war is over, there is always a great preponderance of women over men, a fact which, in its turn, creates many more social problems. Vera Brittain's *Testament of Youth* depicts vividly the vicissitudes of a generation of women who cannot find their natural companions in men of the same age group. The morals of the people, in the fourth place, undergo great change both during and after a war. Careful studies have disclosed that at the end of a war, the rate of criminality, especially in defeated nations, jumps very high. Finally, the effect of war on the economic life of nations is equally appalling. The waste of the World War is too well-known to bear mention.¹

From a purely theoretical point of view, moreover,

¹ For a comprehensive discussion of the effects of war, see P. Sorokin, *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, notably the chapter on "The Sociology of War," New York, 1928.

modern warfare seems to have lost its logical justification. As we have pointed out earlier in this chapter, an excuse for the permanent institution of war lies in its promise to solve a given conflict through social action. It is becoming more and more clear, however, that so far as this fundamental premise is concerned, war is proving unworthy of its objective. In theory, an otherwise unsolvable dispute, originating in contrary interests or ideals, obligates that settlement be made by the use of physical prowess. Each rival group sets out to settle the feud in its own interest, that is, in accordance with its particular conception of truth and justice in the matter, by inflicting suffering on the other. A war is born.

But as soon as the military operations are well under way, the original purpose of justifying a particular claim is replaced, first, by the all-important question of honour, then by the desire for victory at any cost, and, finally, by the ever-growing hatred of the rival group and the inordinate desire for revenge. The emotional tension of wartime makes this abnormal mental attitude the only one possible. The calm state of mind needed in order to reach a just settlement is replaced by an hysteria wherein reason is blurred by emotion, and the desire to reach a solution is lost in a flood of passion to annihilate the opponent. And by the time the war is over, the original issue falls into oblivion and only the desires and ideals of the victor at that moment become a *fait accompli*. Consequently, might becomes right, and the settlement of the original conflict is overlooked in the exploitation of the vanquished. The World War and its subsequent Peace Treaties are among the best examples of this. It so happens, furthermore, that far from establishing the justice of the claims of either party, both belligerents generally lose in the end. Because of the complex character of modern society and international economy, wars are never won. They are only, as always, lost both by victor and the vanquished.

5., NATURE OF TRUTH

The apparent futility of war as a means to social justice springs from still deeper logical and theoretical inconsistencies. The fundamental question arising here is whether violence, the necessary corollary of war, is capable of deciding the truth of the matter? What is truth is an eternal question, and it is doubtful if an absolute truth can ever be established. All, however, agree on its intangibilities, and grant that there can be different interpretations of truth according to different lights. The very intangible nature of truth, then, implies that an exclusive pursuit of any value is opposed to the spirit of truthfulness. An individual can be convinced of his own truth at a given moment, but he can never be absolutely certain in the final analysis. Therefore, he should be open to correction inspired both from within and from without—that is, he should give the benefit of the doubt even to a man of a diametrically opposite point of view. This means the admission on his part that even the opponent may prove to be right. Nevertheless, so long as he remains convinced of his own rightness, he can and should resist the opponent's view while always remaining conscious of the fact that he might need correction. This intangible nature of truth, however, is denied by the doctrine of violence in its final implication, if not directly. For violence operates to establish might as right. Consequently, might becomes an unqualified value; the absolute truth. It follows from there that the employment of violence is anything but an action undertaken in the spirit of truth. It becomes, on the other hand, an exclusive pursuance under an absolute standard. Although tackling from a different angle, Gandhi clearly substantiates the concept of truth as an intangibility in his statement before the Hunter Committee, a commission appointed by the British Parliament to investigate the Non-co-

operation Movement of 1919. In the course of the cross-examination, the following dialogue took place:

Sir Chimanlal. With regard to your Satyagraha doctrine, so far as I understand it, it involves the pursuit of truth and in that pursuit you invite suffering on yourself and do not cause violence to anybody else.

Mr. Gandhi. Yes, sir.

Sir C. However honestly a man may strive in his search for truth his notions of Truth may be different from the notions of others. Who then is to determine the truth?

Mr. G. The individual himself would determine that.

Sir C. Different individuals would have different views as to Truth. Would that not lead to confusion?

Mr. G. I do not think so.

Sir C. Honestly striving after Truth is different in every case.

Mr. G. That is why the non-violence part was a necessary corollary. Without that there would be confusion and worse.

Sir C. Must not the person, wanting to pursue Truth be of high moral and intellectual equipment?

Mr. G. No. It would be impossible to expect that from everybody. If A has evolved a truth by his own efforts which B, C, and others are to accept, I should not require them to have the equipment of A.¹

Every mode of social action directed at the determination of the truth of any matter, then, requires the "necessary corollary of non-violence." The very nature of violence, as we have already seen, nullifies its ability to decide the issue between right and wrong, just and unjust. Happy coincidences such as, for instance, the Russian Revolution or the American War of Independence sometimes cast a shadow of doubt on the foregoing conjecture. For now and then, as in the case of the foregoing examples, it so happens that the popular

¹ *Young India*, 1919-1922, pp. 33-36.

choice of the "right side" wins in the end. A fact often overlooked, however, is that it was not the truth of the claim but superior military strength that caused the victory. It follows from this that violence cannot settle a dispute arising out of social conflict. The World War is perhaps the best and latest manifestation of the phenomenon which substantiates this view. Twenty years after the greatest ordeal of mankind, we are today exactly in the same situation where we were before the War, in 1912 and 1913. And war is threatening again, not because of any new issue, but because of the same issues left unsettled by the World War. The coming war, in its turn, will leave the self-same issues unsettled. It is obvious, therefore, that war, as an institution set up for solving social conflict, transforms itself into a vicious circle of violence.¹

6. PACIFISM: ITS SHORTCOMINGS

War, then, defeats itself. It does not fulfil the promise of its birth, namely, that at its end there will ensue social integration in the place of fissures. It is erroneous to assume, however, that war has been the only instrument devised by men to answer this social need. The practice of settling disputes and differences by peaceful means, on the other hand, is as old as the institution of war itself. Most of the great religions of the world, for instance, have from time immemorial stressed the futility of violence in decisive terms. The doctrine of the sword had fallen in disrepute among the ancient Aryans of India long before history began to be recorded. Latterly the tendency developed into the positive philosophy of non-violence and "non-injury to all living things" under the influence of Buddhism and Jainism. And even before

¹ In contrast, the beauty of Satyagraha lies in the fact (as Gandhi pointed out in connection with the British Ministry's rumoured intention of employing counter-non-co-operation with regard to Ireland on one occasion) that it is "available to either side in a fight, and that it has checks that automatically work for the vindication of truth and justice in preponderating measure."

Buddhism pilgrimaged to China, Confucius and Laotse had preached the gospel of love. Although Judaism does not conceive of God and His world as kind entities, some of the sayings of the Hebrew prophets at least uphold the idea of peace and non-violence. Comparatively young Christianity, too, is woven around the inspiration emanating from the object-lesson of the Prince of Peace. Later on, the blood of the martyrs provided the seed of the church, a reality which brought home to many people the possibilities of non-violence. It was not until the early part of the nineteenth century that the peace idea began to be organized. In 1815, three peace societies were founded in the United States. Following the American example, England founded its first peace society in 1815 in London. Paris and Geneva followed suit in 1821 and 1830 respectively. Since then, there has been a tremendous expansion of the movement, and aided by such leaders as Andrew Carnegie and Nicholas Murray Butler, the movement has taken on international proportions. It has glided into so many bewilderingly diverse channels that at present we have peace sectarians, and conscientious objectors, and Oxford Oathers, those who advocate the outlawry of war, and a score or more other varieties.

Originally, and to a great extent even now, the whole movement derived its strength from the philosophy of *non-resistance to evil* propounded in the Sermon on the Mount. The resultant attitude is one of distrust of war and violence. The religious element is at once the movement's strength and weakness. Its strength lies in the fact that it brings into social and political affairs values other than that of mundane expediency. Its weakness lies in its nature of negation. Not having evolved any positive construct or instrument of its own, it fails to meet difficult social needs and remains at best a pious wish. William Penn, William Lloyd Garrison and, to a great extent, Count Leo Tolstoy, sought in their own characteristic ways to mitigate this shortcoming by evolving a social practice of

passive resistance out of the old theological doctrine of *non-resistance*. It was a step further in so far as it implied that something more than non-resistance is required to achieve certain political and social ends. Nevertheless, the effort never came to anything, so that Tolstoy, the most notable of the doctrinaires of passive resistance and one of the greatest influences on the nineteenth century thought, lamented in his *letter to the liberals*: "There are people who realize that our Government is very bad and who struggle against it, and there have been two ways of carrying on the struggle." After drawing a line between the method of the revolutionaries which consists in an attempt to alter the existing regime by violence, and the method of the "gradualists" which consists in carrying on the struggle without violence and within the limits of the law, conquering constitutional rights bit by bit, he confessed: "Reflection and experience alike show me that both the means of combating Government used heretofore are not only ineffectual but actually tend to strengthen the power and irresponsibility of the Government." However, Tolstoy himself had nothing to offer. What he was groping toward might have been a sort of *direct action just short of war* which Gandhi, partly inspired by the Russian, evolved afterwards in South Africa.

7. INTERNATIONALISM: ITS ILLUSIONS

The peace movement, which remained all throughout a pious wish movement, had, however, one significant effect. It advanced, sometimes directly and at other stages by indirect influence, the cause of *internationalism* which had been growing in strength for several hundred years. Often these two distinctly different movements are confused with each other. To understand the basic dissimilarity between the peace movement and internationalism one has to bear in mind that internationalism is not necessarily pacific in character. On the contrary, the theory of internationalism is an extrapolation of the theory of the State; it implies a

state on a world scale or a confederation of states. The former embodies all the attributes of the State including its violently coercive character. Realizing their impotent stand, a number of pacifists have sought refuge in internationalism; hence the confusion.

Historical necessity, born of the rapid development of world trade, transportation, and communication on an international scale, had paved the way for a "World Federation" idea to materialize. The idea itself, however, is older than these technological advances. Excluding even the great religious teachers who envisaged a union of all peoples, there has been in modern times a brilliant galaxy of men who foresaw a "World Federation." As far back as the fourteenth century, Dante demanded a world empire which would stop all wars. The *grand dessein* of Henry IV at the beginning of the seventeenth century featured the same ambition. Kant in Germany, the *encyclopedists* in France, and rationalists in England and America had the same aspiration, coloured, of course, by their different locales. It was not until the World War, however, that the idea took the shape of institutions, and the travail of centuries brought forth the League of Nations and the World Court. The latter, of course, had its beginnings a little earlier.

Although a great advance toward peace, neither the League of Nations nor the World Court has been able to prevent wars. Japan went into Manchuria despite the League, and recently even, the League's "economic sanctions" failed to stop Italy from subjugating Ethiopia, a member state. To save the League of Nations from further embarrassment, it has not been thought wise for her to take a stand in the Spanish Civil War as well as in the Czechoslovakian crisis. The apologists of the League argue that the international body does not have enough sanctions to enforce its will, and hence its failure. In any case, a perfect League of Nations seems to be somewhere in the far distant future, if at all. Consequently, it is unrealistic to pin one's faith on an uncertain Utopia, meanwhile

neglecting the dire problems arising out of the day to day life of the people. Sometimes it even looks doubtful, in the face of growing nationalism in communistic Russia, that nationalism, or regional localism, to be more precise, will ever stop being a social dynamic. And even if it is possible at some future time to create a real international state, it will remain a moot question whether to invest it with absolute power. "To serve social ends, power should not only be responsible power, it should also be limited in correspondence with the ends it serves. Since no ends are absolute or unlimited, no exercise of power should be."¹

The ultimate sovereignty of the people cannot and should not be superseded either by the State or by the World State. People themselves must, of necessity, have the right to secede, and if that provision is absent, there is always the likelihood of a violent resistance, in other words, war. It follows from this that internationalism even when fully realized in a World State or the like, cannot rule out the possibility of war. For when the *general will* of Rousseau's conception breaks under the pressure of injustice, there is no power on earth which can stop social disintegration.

One of the more patently hopeful side issues of the practice of internationalism is the recent European conferences and consultations in connection with the problem of the redistribution of raw material. A close scrutiny will show that it, at best, is a rerovated social approach discarded long ago. The question has come up because the "have-nots" are grudging the "haves" and threatening with war. The "have-nots" of the past also succeeded occasionally in extricating something from the "haves" without recourse to war, but only on the threat of war. Thus when Alexander the Great invaded India as far back as the fourth century before Christ, Ambhi, ruler of a small country near the present Northwest Frontier of India, supplied "3,000 oxen fatted for the shambles, besides 10,000 or more sheep"²

¹ R. M. MacIver, *Society*, New York, 1936, p. 205.

² Smith, V. A., *The Oxford History of India*, Oxford, 1923, p. 59.

to the Greeks, who needed them badly. Thereupon Alexander went his way and Ambhi was left congratulating himself that he had saved much that he would have lost in a war with the Macedonian. The Sultan Mahmud of Gazni often invaded India in order to stock up on what he could not produce in his barren dominions. Many Indian Maharajahs were known to have averted wars with Mahmud by surrendering to him supplies that he lacked and of which they had plenty. The history of all nations and of all peoples is full of such examples. This technique did avert certain struggles, postponed others. But it never ruled out war.

8. SOCIAL CHANGE: ITS DEMAND FOR "DIRECT ACTION"

The shortcomings of pacifism and the illusions of internationalism are a direct result of an inadequate understanding of the nature of *social change*. The pacifists fail, because they regard peace as an end in itself. As a result, they minimize the significance of other human values, though they may be subjective, such as freedom and justice, which roil people's blood and cause great social and political upheavals. The pacifists' dream is just a pious wish with underpinnings of mere "good will." Naïve in their conception of human nature, they refuse to take into consideration the pluralistic genius of the human *psyche* which we have discussed before. When their hope of peace is frustrated in the process of social change, as often happens, they are in a dilemma. The demand for social change offers them but one alternative, viz., that of upholding the violent method or of maintaining the *status quo*. Out of the dilemma a William Lloyd Garrison chooses to advise a cessation of pacifist activity to prevent its possible interference with the attainment of freedom for the slaves, arguing at the time of the American Civil War that the abolition of slavery is a higher value than peace (thereby countenancing the violent method), or a George Lansbury chooses to sacrifice

all other values on the altar of peace and resigns from the leadership of the Labour Party when the latter votes for "sanctions" against the aggressor Italy (thereby maintaining the *status quo*). There is no other choice left them, for the pacifists fail to realize that something more than good will is required to grease the wheels of a changing order.

The fundamental weakness of the doctrine of internationalism as a guarantee of perpetual peace lies in its underlying credo that negotiation (League of Nations), and arbitration (World Court), are all that is needed to settle a political or social crisis. With these two instruments on an international scale under a World Federation, internationalists argue, there will be no more need for armed conflict. If this were so, there would not have been the Civil War in America where a Federation had existed for a long time. The mere existence of the Tsarist State did not rule out a potential proletariat revolution, neither did the existence of a duly elected government make impossible the recent civil war in Spain. The point we make here is this: just as the existence of the State does not rule out potential civil war or revolution, the World State, even when fully materialized, cannot liquidate the eventuality of civil war or revolution. The agencies of negotiation and arbitration existent in the State have time and again proved insufficient to settle conflict within the State. Similarly, negotiation and arbitration on an international scale are sometimes bound to fail to settle disputes between States or peoples. Social conflict requires something more than arbitration and negotiation for a satisfactory settlement. Hence the delusion that internationalism is a guarantee against violence or war. This is not to argue that it is not useful at all. It certainly can avert some wars. But it cannot be regarded as tantamount to peace on earth. Certain wars shall be necessary even under a future world federation, and if there can be a more desirable method of solving disputes than war, that shall have its use even under a world state.

Neither pacifism nor internationalism, then, suffices to

meet all the implications of social change. The functions of negotiation and arbitration, however indispensable, are not equal to the solution when the dispute in question springs from the very depth of communality—that is, when the *general will* for communality itself is broken. In other words, when no common values remain for both parties so that they can overwhelm the issue that inspires differences, it takes more than negotiation and arbitration to restore the *general will* which Rousscau gives as a prerequisite for the community. At this stage in a social conflict, something more than negotiation and arbitration is required. It is at this stage, too, that wars are called for. "For no political system," writes Alfred Meusel in the course of his article on "Revolution and Counter-Revolution" in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*, "is so flexible as to be susceptible of fundamental change by 'legal' means; and illegality implies resort to force by the revolutionist as well as by the State which he attacks." In other words, force is necessary to insure certain social ends, and in a state or a world state which does not recognize the people's right to decide crucial issues by plebiscite, recourse to "direct action" (which can be non-violent as well as violent), however illegal, becomes not only necessary but incumbent on those who strive to end social injustice.

It is at this point, however, that the pacifists are confronted with the dilemma of either going to the camp of the militarist, or of joining the ranks of inactive pious-wishers who by implication become the pillars that sustain the *status quo*, however unjust. And it is also at this crucial point that Gandhi's Satyagraha offers a way out and proves its utility as a non-violent means to social justice. The distinction between pacifism and Satyagraha on one hand (in so far as the latter includes recourse to direct action, which is held illegal in the present-day system of law), and war and Satyagraha on the other (in so far as the latter's conception of force is absolutely non-violent and, consequently, non-physical), becomes at this stage as

once evident and significant. Hereupon the pacifists stop too soon, and the militarists go too far. In the case of the militarists, the remedy is worse than the grievance, and the means unworthy of the end. In the case of the pacifists, there is the blunder of an exclusive pursuit of a relative value, namely peace. The resultant inaction creates a *no man's land*, and helps maintain an unjust *status quo*. Gandhi proposes a way out by his ideology of non-violent direct action, that is, through his theory of Satyagraha. In his weekly English magazine, *Young India*, he writes on the 12th of May, 1920:

"Never has anything been done on this earth without direct action. I rejected the word 'passive resistance' because of its insufficiency and its being interpreted as a weapon of the weak. It was direct action in South Africa which told and told so effectively that it converted General Smuts to sanity.—But what is more, direct action sustained for eight years left behind it not only no bitterness, but the very Indians, who put up such a stubborn fight against General Smuts, ranged themselves round his banner in 1915, and fought under him in East Africa. It was direct action in Champaran which removed an age-long grievance."

And again:

"The conviction has been growing upon me that things of fundamental importance to the people are not secured by reason alone, but have to be purchased with their suffering.—Nobody has perhaps drawn up more petitions or espoused more forlorn causes than I, and I have come to this fundamental conclusion that if you want something really important to be done you must not merely satisfy the reason, you must move the heart also. The appeal of reason is more to the head, but the penetration of the heart comes from suffering. It opens the inner understanding in men."¹

¹ From a speech delivered at Birmingham, England, in October, 1931.

CHAPTER X

WAR AND SATYAGRAHA

I. SATYAGRAHA: NON-VIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

THE CONCEPT OF non-violent direct action, then, becomes the distinguishing characteristic of Satyagraha in its comparison with war as well as with pacifism. The element of *direct action*, without the stipulation of non-violence, however, is shared by Satyagraha in common with war. It is this similarity between Gandhi's non-violent resistance and the permanent institution of war (along with a few other characteristics common to both modes of settling disputes which will be discussed later) that demands our special attention with its promise of social practicability. "So far war has been the only force that can discipline a whole community," wrote William James, "and until an equivalent discipline is organized, I believe that war must have its way. But I have no serious doubt that the ordinary prides and shames of social man, once developed to a certain intensity, are capable of organizing such a moral equivalent as I have sketched, or some such other just as effective for preserving manliness of type. It is but a question of time, of skilful propagandism, and of opinion-making men seizing historic opportunities."¹

It was the full realization of the nature of social change, which we have discussed before, that led William James to demand a moral equivalent of war to end war. Failing to achieve its end through negotiation and arbitration, the

¹ *The Moral Equivalent of War*, 27th Publication of the American Association for International Conciliation, February, 1910, pp. 17-18.

community exerts its right to take the matter in its own hands.¹ Thereupon ensues some mode of social action. If we fail to evolve a non-violent mode of social action to deal with such a situation, we will leave the possibility of war intact. It appears upon observation of experiments in India described already that Gandhi has actually evolved what William James demanded but failed to offer. Consequently, Satyagraha as a moral equivalent for war rightly resembles war in many respects (in which factor lies the effectiveness of non-violent direct action), without having the horrors that violence entails, without the excessive price that war costs mankind and without entangling itself in the moral and logical incompatibility in the means-end relationship (in which factor lies the preferability of Satyagraha). In the next few paragraphs, therefore, we will try to trace the features common to both institutions in order to unfold the effectiveness of Satyagraha. Toward the end of the chapter we will also further discuss the social and political implications of Satyagraha in order to establish its potentialities as a permanent institution after the war pattern.

A comparative study of the war-process and the Satyagraha-process is bound to lead to a further understanding of non-violent direct action since the Western world is sufficiently familiar with the workings of the institution which is based on physical coercion. It will also delineate the effectiveness and social adaptability of Gandhi's way of settling disputes since we all know the effectiveness of armed forces and their operations. We have already pointed out two common features between war and non-violent direct action, namely, that both, in the first place, are modes of

² Gandhi believes in the ultimate sovereignty of the people. Subsequently a modified conception of the *contractual* basis of the State is always present in his writings. According to him, "The sole justification for the existence of the State is the assumption that it promotes the well-being of the people. This alone constitutes its claim to the allegiance of its subjects." Consequently, the Satyagrahic conception of the State is either as an organ of the community (*MacIver*) or as an association along with many other associations in the society (*Laski*).

social action aiming at the solution of social conflict and secondly, that both come into being when and where negotiation and arbitration fall short of solving dispute. Underlying these two characteristics common to both violence and non-violence, is the basic assumption that certain radical social changes cannot be brought about save by mass action capable of precipitating an emotional crisis, and that the humdrum everyday existence of human life needs shaking up in order that men may arrive at fateful decisions. Constant habitual action that flows undisturbed under a tranquil social milieu blurs the vision of the people when it comes to novel social forces and their potential gravity. Consequently, the issue must be successfully and sufficiently dramatized in order to arouse mass interest and mass enthusiasm preparatory to reaching a crucial decision. This requires not merely an intense consciousness of the issues involved, but also an emotional crisis in the life of the community. With respect to this particular reading of social psychology, there is no disagreement at all between the exponents of violent warfare and Gandhi. In a statement given to the press on December 4, 1932, on the eve of his famous *fast unto death*, Gandhi said:

“Those who have to bring about radical changes in human conditions and surroundings, cannot do it except by raising a ferment in society. There are only two methods of doing this, violent and non-violent. Violent pressure is felt on the physical being and it degrades him who uses it as it depresses the victim, but non-violent pressure exerted through self-suffering, as by fasting, works in an entirely different way. It touches not the physical body, but it touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed.”

The occasion which inspired this statement contained many factors of the war-process. Surrounding Gandhi's

"Epic Fast" were action, drama, *élan*, and imaginative appeal. The cause for which Gandhi staked his life was also enriched by the halo of sacredness. What is more important, there was no trace of bitterness on either side involved in the crisis, nor was there any of the objectionable qualities entailed in the violent procedure of war. There appears to be an amazing agreement between Gandhi's analysis of his Satyagraha-process and the formulation of the war-process in the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*. Sidney Hook writes in his article on violence:

"It is not hard to understand why violence seems to be an invariable concomitant of all mass movements of social reform. First of all, it symbolizes in dramatic fashion the issues involved and forces upon them the attention of those elements in the community which cannot be stirred into activity by rational appeal.—There always seem to be more individuals susceptible to the emotionalism bound up with the immediacies of action—its thrill, its imaginative appeal and the ultimate sacrifices which make the cause sacred.—Some theorists, such as Sorel, offer as the only practical justification of the poetic cult of violence its usefulness in dramatizing the conflict of ethical values."

Non-violent direct action, then, bases itself on the same principles of mass appeal and the effectiveness of the resultant mass action as the tested ideology of war does.

2. SATYAGRAHA: AN INSTRUMENT OF AGGRESSION

It was this "appeal to direct action," analogous to the military "appeal to arms," that captured the imagination of an inactive and stagnant Indian people, both in India and in South Africa. The result was the cavalcade of mass movements, some comprising small interest-groups

or big regional units and others, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, "incidents" that took place in South Africa, 1906 and 1914 and the continuous struggle since 1914 have left no sceptics as to the mass a Satyagraha and its pliability as a device for huge tions. This factor naturally leads us to a consider the third characteristic that Satyagraha and v in common. A mass movement employing direct Satyagraha lends itself to the training of solc generals (*Swayamsevakas*), to organization, discip strategy. One significant aspect of Satyagrahic is that, like war activity, it has both defensive an sides. There is an inexhaustible store of material these various subdivisions of Satyagraha, espec Indian vernaculars, some of which have been in other chapters dealing directly with the specifi of the movement.

However, in this chapter bearing on the theoretic fo tion of the ideology, we should make an excepti the "offensive" or "aggressive" phase of Satya This is made necessary mainly because of the use of words in describing Satyagraha in English. the average Westerner's conception of Gandhi's mov as "merely a passive refusal to do things" requ thorough overhauling. Satyagraha also compels the opp to do things or to stop doing them. But this phase o violent direct action is generally missed, and part c blame should fall on the 'poor translations of the In order to distinguish Gandhi's practice from v former has usually been symbolized by some sort ranging from non-resistance (Christian doctrine, resistance (Tolstoyan variety), to non-violent re (Gandhism). The last of these three expressions, no a conveys the essence of Satyagraha. But the very infer of "responsiveness" implied in the word "resistance creates an impression that Satyagraha can never be a

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WAR AND SATYAGRAHA

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3. THE POWER OF SUFFERING

The fourth fundamental similarity between Satyagraha lies in their identical conception of power, to wit, suffering. A close scrutiny of violence will invariably show that it stakes its existence on the dynamic concept as the generator of power. By inflicting suffering on the enemy, the warriors seek to break the force, make him surrender, to annihilate him, to end and with him all opposition. Suffering is a source of social power which compels and is more important from a practical viewpoint of suffering" has worked in the history of race, and worked with more inexorable than perhaps any other law. Practically all the as well as the usefulness of war, consequently on this human reality and social dynamic. It is point, it is worth noting, that Satyagraha is *par excellence*.

Gandhi's whole theory is based on the concept as a source of human as well as social force. There is a paradoxical twist in the Satyagraha generating power from suffering. In Satyagraha inviting suffering from the opponent and not suffering upon him that the resultant power. The basic formula is the same, but its application face. It almost amounts to putting the energy gear. This novel method of generating social power suffering has produced the desired results in the past twenty years. The angles involved in and utilizing Satyagraha force from suffering

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common to both war and Satyagraha. There is romance in non-violent direct action, as there is in war. It also offers an opportunity to display heroism and to earn glory and fame. The glow of self-gratification that follows the feeling that one has done his bit for the Cause is also a significant reward of Satyagraha.¹

An opportunity to endure for one's cause, to display heroism and courage, to engage in adventures and to "do or die" is indisputably one of the premiums of war. As William James once said it, "Militarism is the great preserver of our ideals of hardihood, and human life with no use for hardihood would be contemptible." Similar reasons led Ruskin to remark that "War is the foundation of all high virtues and faculties of men." Still more dramatic are Mussolini's words: "War alone brings up to its highest tension all human energy and puts the stamp of nobility upon the peoples who have the courage to meet it. All other trials are substitutes, which never really put men into the position where they have to make the great decision—the alternative of life and death." In our over-zealousness for peace, we cannot and should not dispense with opportunities for adventure and human endurance, self-sacrifice and the "do or die" spirit. In evolving, therefore, an effective substitute for war, we should look for one which would also offer its participants the supreme dilemma of "to be or not to be."

Satyagraha campaigns in India and elsewhere have

¹ The halo of glory imparted by sacrifice and suffering as a consequence of engaging in direct action against the established order has had, it appears, significant repercussions in India's public affairs. Among other things, it has produced a deluge of "war heroes." It has also changed the very conception of leadership. Tradition's revered intellectual rich is no more in the highest esteem by the people. Instead a poor man or woman, heretofore insignificant otherwise, who has played a prominent role in the struggle, consequently, has suffered heavily at the hands of the opponent has a chance of becoming the trusted leader of the masses. He is to be reckoned with by the privileged and the government alike. It seems that the elite has at last been changed by Gandhi's movement. An enlightening movement can be made of the changing character of leadership in the light of the movement.

" SATYAGRAHA

ama in non-violent resistance. give way easily and is apt to upon the non-violent resisters, lternative of "life or death." ary conditions for Satyagraha 3,000 persons were imprisoned e women. The number stopped ere no more Indians to solicit jails were filled to capacity. 'lathi-charges," resisters being nd shot, became more frequent of property and bank-accounts, r for life, and death by shooting tyagrahis in those days. But owing the masses. provided people to "do or die." And on of doing one's little bit for y.¹

PERMANENT INSTITUTION

ndamental likeness of Satya- aer's capacity to be an organized ne of peace. Armed forces are and associational form of war. ss" to meet any eventuality. the morale of the people. No effective until it has troops in be an instrument of protection tacks from the outside. William ed an "army against nature." tion, to wit, a permanent corps

¹ the percentage of those who joined the r the sheer "romance" of it was especially f the country. There seems to be an interest- maginative appeal of war and Satyagraha. d other such parallels between war and tting

of volunteers to replace the 'standing army.' The occasion has not yet arisen to organize such a volunteer corps in India because of the very fact that the present-day Satyagrahis have not yet become a part of the government of the country. There are, nevertheless, scores of training centres where "village workers" and "Social Servants" carry on even during the period when Indians are not engaged in direct action. There is also the "Hindustani Sevalal," a great all-India organization for training and maintaining Satyagrahis.

Of greater significance from the standpoint of the study of Satyagraha, as distinct from the study of the *Swaraj* movement, are the more recent efforts at forming what Gandhi has designated as the Indian Peace Brigade. This Brigade is conceived of as a permanent corps of non-violent resisters, which may be used, in part or as a whole, for all tranquillizing and appeasement purposes at all times. It may continue to exist even after *Swaraj* is won, and its personnel may be utilized for ends other than political. As Gandhi suggested in the last months of 1938, its members may be called upon to quell—of course non-violently—a communal riot in Lahore, or they may be commissioned to the tribal land bordering on the Khyber Pass to disarm the Afridis and to bring them under civil authority. The latter suggestion was made by both Gandhi and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, popularly known as the Frontier Gandhi. The idea of the Indian Peace Brigade seems to be one of the reasons for Gandhi's recent visits to the North-west Frontier Province.

Gandhi's suggestion is vigorously taken up, in the India of the great plains, by the *Gandhi Seva Sangha*, an organization composed of celebrities more famous for their Gandhism than for their nationalism, and devoted solely to the development and the continuation of Satyagraha as a technique and as a social philosophy. In the northern hills of the frontier, Gandhi's call receives its lusty echo from the activities of Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan

SATYAGRAHA

Mr. Khan claims that he has 10,000 non-violent resisters in the tribes as well as eager to

When Satyagraha becomes a system can be evolved as a substitute of war. Volunteers of Satyagraha can, overnight, be stationed at strategic points. Even a village in the provinces can be made more or less in all the essentials, expert "Gandhi" can be trained in the potentiality of being a conscription system in the use of the various methods of repression from outside or

A large number of non-violent resisters in the Brahmin *gurus* of ancient India from 400 B.C. to the early part of the Christian era. Similar to the Christian monks in India, similar, if not the same, in Burma, even today, it is difficult to find a monastery for a day, preparing him for the day when he becomes the head of the monastery. There are such organizations as "The Society," "Servants of the Missions," "Aryasamaj," "Gandhi's Satyagraha" (Gandhis). In the United States the best example of what such organizations, however, in Gandhi's doctrine of Satyagraha, of Satyagraha corps, of non-violence and trained in the use of it possibly be evolved

until the State takes over the job, as there surely cannot be a "standing army" without the patronage of the government.¹

6. COERCION AND CONVERSION

Satyagraha, then, has these six effective and practicable attributes of war. It is unnecessary to add that there are equally fundamental differences between the two methods for solving social conflicts. The greatest of the differences, as we have pointed out before, lies in the diverse methods of generating social power through suffering. In Satyagraha, unlike war, suffering is utilized, as it were, through reverse gear. Consequently, non-violent direct action operates to compel not through inflicting horrors and destruction as war does, but by disrupting the morale of the opponent by various psychological suggestions. As Gandhi sees it, "It touches not the physical body, but it touches and strengthens the moral fibre of those against whom it is directed." In other words, Satyagraha, unlike war, is a process of conversion in a special sense of the term; special because there is always present in it what for the lack of a better name we will call the *compelling* element. Non-violent direct action, by compelling the opponent to realize the error of his ways, prepares a mental plateau where both parties can resume negotiations, the initial failure of which had necessitated the engagement, on the terms of equality and with a view to a just settlement of the dispute. This is a process entirely different from that of war, which, when successful, destroys the very existence of opposing claims.

The crucial point involved here is the question of whether Satyagraha, like war, is also a *coercive force*? Gandhi himself has time and again refused to see an element of coercion in non-violent direct action. In the light of events in India in the past twenty years as well as in the light of certain

¹ R. B. Gregg has eight such similarities representing a somewhat different line of thinking in his book *The Power of Non-Violence*, Philadelphia, 1934.

of Gandhi's own activities, however, it becomes apparent that Satyagraha does contain the element of coercion, if in a somewhat modified form. The word "coercion" has numerous connotations, and there is also in it a trace of punishment. The self-purifying and self-suffering phase of Satyagraha, on the other hand, does not allow punishment to be a part of the power of non-violent direct action. The Satyagrahi, as Gandhi puts it, "knowing that the remedy lies with himself, ceases to harbour the spirit of revenge and learns to be satisfied with a redress of the wrong he is seeking to remedy." Herein perhaps is founded Gandhi's refusal to acknowledge the element of coercion as a part of his ideology of non-violence. It is misleading, therefore, to describe Satyagraha as a form of *non-violent coercion* as Mr. C. M. Case has done in his book bearing that title. But it is equally misleading, on the other hand, to call Satyagraha a pure and simple process of conversion as Gandhi and some of his followers would have it. There is an element of what, for want of a better term, we shall call *compulsion* in it, if not of coercion, since the latter implies revenge and punishment. As a matter of fact, Gandhi himself once used the very word *compel* in connection with his ideology. Criticizing Lord Chelmsford's speech in 1920 which upheld the Punjab Martial Law and justified, subtly, the Jallianwalla Bag Massacre, Gandhi said in a statement to the press:

"The remarks on the Punjab mean a flat refusal to grant redress. He would have us to concentrate on the problems of the immediate future! The immediate future is to *compel* repentance on the part of the Government on the Punjab matter."

Nevertheless, there being no spirit of punishment or revenge, *compulsion* does not achieve the extent of *coercion*. It stops with effecting what Gandhi calls "a change of heart," and the consequent "redress of the wrong." As a

result, the opponent is not vanquished, but victory comes to both sides. Satyagraha, therefore, does not entail the vicious circle of defeat and revenge, and settles the question once and for all by an amicable agreement.

In spite of it all, it is well to remember that there is an element of *compulsion* in Satyagraha as it is worked out in India. From careful study, as well as from personal experience, it appears to the writer that Satyagraha would not be so satisfactory a substitute for war had it not this element of *compulsion*. The adjustment of the line of demarcation between Satyagrahic compulsion and the coercion employed by war, between non-violent direct action and violence, will always remain a moot question unless the distinction is made on the broad basis of the non-physical and the physical. *Compulsion*, in this special sense, must and does exclude injury to the physical being of the opponent. It also must and does leave unscathed the primary necessities of the opponent's life. This distinction is, no doubt, crude, as every distinction which is not merely theoretic but also has a bearing on the behaviour of millions of men, should be.

CHAPTER XI

DIRECT ACTION IN DEMOCRACY

"WHAT THE PEOPLE really want," Chief Justice Charles Evans Hughes once said, "they usually get. With the ultimate power of change through amendment in their hands, they are always able to obtain whatever a preponderant and abiding sentiment strongly demands."

The Chief Justice was addressing a joint session of Congress, assembled on March 4, 1939, to celebrate its 150th anniversary. His words, therefore, had added significance. One of the supreme guardians of the Constitution was thus proclaiming his faith, and the faith of the American people, in a democratic form of government and in its ability to meet dire social needs.

The writer is not ignorant of "the American way." On the contrary, he has a deep and abiding faith in the democratic way of doing things. Consequently, he is interested in exploring the validity of non-violent direct action in a democracy and the place of Satyagraha, which is at times extra-legal, in American culture. No one is wise enough or informed enough to weave the ways of one people into those of another. But the times are such as not to brook waiting upon perfection.

The writer is not so unmindful of his limitations as a non-American as to attempt with confidence to point the significance of Satyagraha as an instrument of action in present-day America. But he has lived continuously in the United States for the past five years. He has travelled across the great continent and visited its four frontiers; he has touched practically all of the forty-eight States;

he has had occasion to meet all sorts of Americans; and he has mixed freely with all classes of people.¹ As a professional man who is returning to India, he has naturally embraced every opportunity during these years to appraise the quality of American culture and its central thrusts. Particularly, he has asked himself over and over: Are there essential differences between my people and Americans? To what degree is such a mode of concerted action as that put into successful operation in India by Gandhi and his followers *sui generis*, a thing dependent upon Indian traditions and the network of religious beliefs and culture-traits that are the texture of Indian life? Upon the answer to such questions depends the significance of a movement like Satyagraha for Western countries. If the Indian people are fundamentally "different," if they respond differently to basically common human experience, if the so-called mysticism of Hinduism provides a matrix for feelings and actions radically unlike that which exists in Western countries—then it is possible to regard Satyagraha and this account of it simply as a quaint practice in a remote part of the world.

I. SATYAGRAHA AND AMERICAN CULTURE

But is it so? The question has to be considered. The magnitude of the cultural strains in the United States and elsewhere at the present time leaves no option for those who are concerned for the future of civilization. The accumulated values of centuries are caught in the spinning grooves of coercive immediacies. Every experiment that gives any promise of effectiveness must be

¹ It will be interesting, by way of contrast, to recall at this moment the "authentic" books written on India by American and European "scholars" and literati. Judgments have been passed on Indian culture, art, civilization, politics, religion and social problems after a few days' stay at Bombay, Delhi and Simla or a hurried railway trip from Calcutta to Bombay to catch the boat for "home." Generally the "irrefutable facts" are gathered from the "impartial observer's" own expatriates while sipping whisky and soda and complaining about the climate in some air-conditioned club-house.

considered, because the stakes involved are such as to make tolerable no blind spots to any mode of action in which hope may lie. It is in this mood, therefore, that the following suggestions are made.¹

As a sovereign unit, a democracy, like any other form of government, has to look to its national and external defence. The applicability of Satyagraha to this phase of the affairs of state has been pointed out elsewhere in this book.² Internally, too, a democracy has to face problems of inter-group adjustment that the very co-living of a people or of peoples necessitates. The mere existence of a democratic form of government does not automatically solve all such questions, although it perhaps provides greater possibilities, constitutional as well as legal, for adjustment than any other governmental system would or could. Perhaps people generally get what they "really want" in a democracy. But even Chief Justice Hughes admits that we can obtain in a democracy only what "a preponderant and abiding sentiment strongly demands."

Experience and observation alike have shown that demands can be crushed and have been crushed in a democracy before a "preponderant and abiding sentiment" could be rallied behind them. To be satisfactorily fulfilled, demands have to be made either by the preponderant majority of the people or by groups which can secure the support of a majority of the legislators through lobbying and pressure politics. But all the crucial causes and all the oppressed groups in a democracy cannot muster such support, and hence the inadequacy of mere parliamentary procedure at times. It is such situations that lead men like Sorel to regard the "*march towards deliverance*" as narrowly conditioned, on the one

¹ In an effort to check his own judgments, the writer talked through in detail his views expressed in this chapter with Robert S. Lynd, author of *Middletown* and *Middletown in Transition*. The latter has also gone over the chapter as written. This constitutes some check, the writer feels, against the possibility of extravagant misinterpretation of the niceties of the American scene.

² See subdivision 14 in Chapter I, and subdivision 5 in Chapter X.

hand, by the experimental knowledge that we have acquired from the obstacles which have opposed themselves to the satisfaction of our imaginations (or, if we like, by the feeling of social determinism) and, on the other, by a profound conviction of our natural weakness."

American democratic traditions, nurtured under "frontier" conditions, provide a wide scope for direct, man-to-man action in such a context. It is with difficulty that sanctions have been accumulated behind the impersonal austerity of "due process of the law," as over against the more humanly direct course of "taking the law into one's own hands." The contrast here is not between lawfulness and lawlessness, but, rather, between an institutionalized handling of conflict-situations as over against a more direct, immediate, and personal procedure. The fact that men have succeeded as far as they have in substituting the institutionalized for the direct resolution of conflicts represents a genuine advance; for, although "taking the law into one's own hands" may occasionally result in redressing a wrong when the sheriff and the judge are corrupt, more often than not it results in the lynching of helpless scapegoats. This fact constitutes a warning; but it does not obliterate the power and utility of certain kinds of more direct procedures when these are appropriate.

Most of men's, day-by-day differences have been, and always will be, settled by direct procedures. It is only in certain more formal and dangerous types of differences among persons and groups that the institutionalized procedures of courts, arbitration, and parliaments have been introduced. What the world appears to confront at present, however, is the incapacity of these milder, more formal procedures to cope with certain types of existing conflicts. Complex, sophisticated institutions generate all manner of highly stylized accompanying modes of procedure. Thus international diplomacy has become an elaborate maze of subtle negotiations, like moves in a game of chess. It is where such procedures fail, as

they are so perilously close to failing today in dealing with imperialist exploitation, with fascist dictatorships, with anti-Semitism, with lynching, with labour controversies, that it is worth while to consider an appeal beyond these institutionalized ways of handling conflict—straight back to the core of human traits on which human living rests.

American familiarity with such candid, direct appeals makes the latter an instrument backed by strong sanctions and, correspondingly, all the more likely to be successful. Here is one of the peculiar strengths of a new culture with rugged "frontier" traditions still upon it. The essence of the matter is not an appeal to violence, but an appeal to human decencies which in America are still but partially cloaked under various more formal ways of responding, and which can easily be aroused by the dramatization of direct action.

American culture exhibits dangerous elements of disintegration at crucial points. Urbanization in a world of individual striving is dissipating many of the elements of neighbourly interaction and reciprocal recognition of man by man which existed in the small communities that were the rule when American institutions took form. The intimate checks and controls of common sentiment are losing force. In the resulting competitive welter, men are fumbling alone or in more and more coercive power-blocs to wrest a living security from the American scene. As Professor E. P. Herring of Harvard University has remarked in a recent paper on American institutions, "Never since the rise of modern statehood have there been such great power-areas dissociated so clearly from social control." This means that conflict is an increasingly dominant note in American life. The fact that this stands out so starkly in the current international scene, as well, underlines the endemic quality of conflict in Western cultures, and the urgent need to develop all possible techniques for the peaceful, intelligent, and constructive resolution of conflicts.

Such a technique of non-violent, though compelling,

direct action is in actual, effective use in India. This would appear to leave the Western world—confronting its design for living seemingly built increasingly upon conflict—with the lone remaining question: Are Indians so different from Americans or Englishmen or Frenchmen as to make a successful Indian practice in India hopelessly inapplicable in the West? The superficial differences among cultures are, no doubt, great. In the writer's judgment, however, the point of reference lies below the externals of cultural patterning—one should ferret out, to use Pareto's concepts, "residues" from under "derivations."

The carriers of every culture are human beings. And there is evidence for believing that in basic *human mechanisms* people the world over are largely similar. Human beings everywhere exhibit basic responses, though, of course, cultures pattern the occasions for and precise manifestations of these differently. Men as human creatures feel sympathy and recognize the need for it in others. Men yearn over their children and grieve with the bereaved. They respond to integrity in other persons. They recognize unselfishness and distinguish it from selfishness.

The utility of this spontaneous need for mutuality in human living, with its accompanying recognition in other human beings of qualities of courage, integrity, unselfishness, and the like, lies in the resulting existence throughout and underneath all the paraphernalia of institutional forms of a tough, continuing network of dynamic *human* tendencies to act in certain ways. These are as close as social science and the operational realities of public administration can get to the insistent ultimates of living motivation. We know that human beings are attracted by such qualities in others. The genuine assertion of such qualities kindles an active response, a psychological reality which has been demonstrated over and over again in the operation of Satyagraha in India. This, the writer believes, is not unique to India, but, rather, common to human stuff in action everywhere.

In the same way, equally dynamic results may follow from the normal and spontaneous revulsion of human beings to violence against unarmed persons and to all forms of cruelty and bloodshed. Special groups, and indeed whole populations, seemingly become accustomed, by profession or by repeated familiarity, to certain types of oppression. Thus the institution of slavery may become widely tolerated. Or the Nazi persecutions of the Jews may appear to be accepted by "the German people." And soldiers have repeatedly in history fired at the command of their officers upon helpless crowds.

And yet a dramatic overtone to such incidents is the recurrent spectacle of popular protest against such acts—e.g., the ill-concealed disapproval of thousands of German citizens after the organized anti-Jewish excesses of November 1938. What would have happened had the violated people dramatized their suffering, had they themselves provoked the fusillade instead of falling as helpless victims of the opponent's wrath. . . .

The unorganized but humanly authentic disapproval of scattered individuals and groups uncovers a vantage point wherein Satyagrahic tactics could be utilized for desired ends. By dramatizing their sacrificial suffering, the people violated can quicken the sympathy of the citizens at large, rally it behind their cause and, with this added strength, compel a "change of heart" in the opponent.

The labour movement provides another conflict-situation in the Western world, especially in democracies, where Satyagraha can effectively be utilized. Labour strife tends to follow a familiar pattern: pressure is met by counter-pressure, force leads to more and more overt counter-force, and soon an issue with large potentialities for popular appeal to decent human sympathies slips over into the "law" and "the violation of property rights"; and from then on the issue tends to be fought out in a maze of legal technicalities basically irrelevant to the *human* issues involved. If labour could hold the issue firmly

on the humane qualities involved, not meeting force with violent "intimidation" and the all too frequent rough tactics, the struggle could not so continuously be forced off this level onto the *impersonal* level of court action. Capitalist, imperialist, and other forms of institutionally based force live by depersonalizing *class* appeals. But when the application of such class pressures is not met and stiffened by equally depersonalizing counter class pressures, the issue cannot be comfortably joined on familiar ground, and this works disconcerting havoc within the ranks of the aggressors. To propose this is to ask much of labour, in fact, a rank-and-file discipline that goes beyond the "fighting solidarity" exhibited in even most successful strikes.⁶ There would be defeats. But the essence of the experience of Satyagraha in India is that defeats cannot continue indefinitely when the issue is thus kept clear.

There is yet another avenue from which labour may receive reinforcement. It is known to be a matter of concern to "the authorities" whether the militia called out on strike-breaking duty will fire, if necessary, upon the striking citizenry. In some historically known cases they have actually refused. How much more consideration would the strikers get if the latent psychological conflict in the uniformed guards were heightened by the consistent display of purely non-violent, though courageous, behaviour by the strikers. Here the *self-purification* stipulation of Satyagrahic strategy¹ becomes of crucial importance. The meaning of this condition is that the empty-handed individual with a just cause appeals directly to another individual, as one human being to another, for the human right to live and to be free. Whether labour can use this technique depends upon its capacity to rid itself of personally ambitious leaders and to practise personal and collective discipline. This means that where a present issue is snarled up in mutual acts of offence and defence, the workers would accept part of the blame for the "wrong"

¹ See subdivision 4 in Chapter I.

of the bosses they are fighting. For the tyrant has the power to inflict only that which we lack the strength to resist. It is our own personal weaknesses that enable others to treat us the way they do and still to save their faces with their fellow beings in the process. Discarding those weaknesses means clipping the power of the opponent. This, coupled with dramatized and organized sacrificial suffering, would also insure a largely favourable public opinion, which is normally opposed to bloodshed and torture from any quarter. This procedure has an especially significant bearing upon a democracy. The democratic arrangement of the ways of ordering the life of the community tends to prevent a conflict-situation from hardening into a permanently irreconcilable stalemate. The fundamental communal unity underlying the sporadic and temporary periods of strife should be especially apparent in a democracy. Once this basic unity is granted and respected, public opinion, aroused by the heroic though non-violent direct action which is resorted to in the absence of relief stemming from constitutional and legal procedures, would serve as what Chief Justice Hughes calls "a preponderant and abiding sentiment" behind the workers' demands. On the farmers' front, similar line of action can profitably be employed by the "sharecroppers" and other agricultural groups labouring under legal disabilities.

Democratic institutions carry the strength they do because they rest upon precisely this level of human assertion. They affirm a thing that few, if any, cultures have managed fully to institutionalize, namely, the intrinsic dignity and worth of "every man's son." In times of stress, it is to this level of reaffirmation that democracy returns to validate its right to persist in the democratic quest.

It is because Satyagraha strikes straight down to this level of common human awareness that the success of its appeal has been so great in India. There it has flowed across the hardened lines of centuries of caste practices. And it is the same appeal to things deep in men and women

everywhere that raises Satyagraha as a valid hypothesis, at least, fit for testing in other parts of the world. When American workers align themselves against their employers, the situation rapidly hardens into the familiar pattern of depersonalized force met by counter-force which the Western world knows so well. Thus we see basically humanely disposed employers fighting with all their resources to prevent a type of action that on large humane grounds they do not challenge. This is the great paradox of man in culture: we recognize things as human persons that the culture frequently encourages us to forget as parts of institutions.

The appeal of one human being to another is at once the most primitive and authentic form of social communication. It is because the Satyagraha of Gandhi moves so surely on this level of social interaction that it presents an opportunity for a fresh start in dealing with conflict-situations which none of us can afford to dismiss untried.

2. THE DILEMMA OF THE LIBERAL

A peculiar dilemma of the intelligent liberal in America is involved in his recognition that "it is later than you think" and, to quote from another recent title, "men must act"; he recognizes that Fabian gradualness can hardly cope with the large and intricate problems America faces; and yet he turns from the implications of crude, violently revolutionary direct action. Hence the impotent, "anguished awareness" which Max Lerner recognizes in the contemporary liberal. War is an impossibly crude and wasteful stone axe for the purpose of modern man. The American Constitution grants the people their final right of revolution. But few people in a democracy want a revolution. They want to get ahead with living—to marry and have children, to grow in the niceties of personal and community life, and to grow old with security and dignity, surrounded by a world which understands and grants affection freely to those who have lived well

and, truly. The crux of the matter lies in the search for an answer to the question: how can change, and desirable constructive adjustments be brought about when needed without the disruptions of destructive violent conflict? How to neutralize and paralyze the violence of the opponent without counter-violence of our own, which only increases the destruction without solving problems, is, in a nutshell, the dilemma of the liberal.

Satyagraha here stands not as a universal panacea. It represents, on the contrary, just one mode of direct action, resting upon the strongest human sanctions, that can be invoked when all else fails and no alternative presents itself but open application of force. For *Satyagraha is to be employed only when anything, except violence and war, is more desirable than the existing state of affairs*. As such, it appears to be a genuine social invention which can be invoked in a world too accustomed in certain crucial conflict-situations to leap to the use of incendiary force. Force, without irreconcilable antagonism, the essence of Satyagraha, draws the teeth of dynamic conflict, because it is an expression of strength and unselfish integrity which evokes a similar response from the persons and groups to whom it is addressed.

Thus Satyagraha does not force a choice between lawful and constitutional means on one hand and direct action on the other. Instead, it offers a choice between non-violent direct action (Satyagraha), and violent direct action (riots, civil wars, revolutions and wars). For men always resort to direct action when institutional procedures fail them. When dissatisfied with parliamentary procedure, men have in the past staged riots and "street fightings." When aware of the inadequacies of lawful institutions, they are at the present taking the law into their own hands whenever they can get away with it. When desperate, they will resort to revolution. Thus direct action is always with us, either actually or in its imminent form. Satyagraha only shows that it can be non-violent and, consequently, infinitely less destructive.

CONCLUDING CONJECTURES

FOUR HUNDRED YEARS ago, Nicolo Machiavelli prescribed force and fraud as the surest means to attainment of worldly ends. But *Il Principe* had predecessors long before Machiavelli's birth. In fact, fourteen hundred years before Machiavelli, Kautilya, prime minister of Emperor Chandragupta and popularly known as the "Indian Machiavelli," had given a more detailed analysis of means of attaining mundane objectives. Kautilya recommended suasion and bribery before recourse to force and fraud. These methods have proven their effectiveness; they have helped adventurers build empires and statesmen maintain their privileged positions. A system built upon suasion, bribery, force and fraud created history's war lords and feudal aristocracy. It has enabled big nations to engulf smaller ones; and shrewd individuals, by becoming a dominant part of the system, have turned themselves into industrial tycoons. The principles advanced by an ancient Hindu and modernized by a medieval Italian have been accepted almost universally as the only realistic approach to conquest and power.

But if the preceding pages have any valid implication, it is their reiterated assertion that there is yet another road to victory. The Indian successes of Satyagraha, without recourse to any of the old political formulae, very nearly clinches this argument. Sacrificial suffering, which is one's readiness to fight and die for one's values, Gandhi has demonstrated in India and in South Africa, is also a social dynamic which produces results here and now.

However, it is not a new discovery. Many a great son of man has visualized its potentiality. Jesus, to use only

one example, exhorted his disciples to extend the right cheek while the left was still smarting from the opponent's blow. The rewards that the patriarchs held out for such conduct, however, were to be received in the next world; they were spiritual and dependent upon God's grace. The conquest was moral and not material, and the gratification of senses and desires was entirely introactive and personal. Gandhi's genius lies in the fact that, from a celestial atmosphere, he brought sacrificial suffering down to the terrestrial terrain: he demonstrated its efficacy in producing desired conditions, in fulfilling calculated ends here and now. Moreover, he expanded the old hankering for individual redemption into a drive for concerted group action directed toward group ends.

The crucial assumption of Gandhi's ideology, so consistently verified by results in India and in South Africa, is that Satyagraha's self-courted suffering is as effective socially as the suffering war inflicts on the other side. Like violence, sacrificial suffering can thwart the opponent's efforts, influence his attitudes and actions, expose his moral defences and thereby break his morale. Unlike violence, sacrificial suffering has the unique capacity to dramatize whatever there may be that is inconsistent, unjust or inferior in the opponent or the opposing group. Thus it works a "change of heart" in the opponent and prepares him to resume negotiations and parleys on terms of equality.

Organized sacrificial suffering on a multitudinous scale in India has more than once, we have seen, succeeded in neutralizing or paralyzing the coercive agencies of the British *Raj*. It has rendered the state jails ineffective by sending more men to court imprisonment than could be accommodated there, and it has wrought a "change of heart" in soldiers and police. These would-be guardians of "law and order" have thrown away their batons and firearms when faced with determined, sincere, and completely non-violent Satyagrahi rebels. Their "go-ahead-

and-hit-me" attitude has thus won the nationalists many notable victories over British officials by making a shambles of the usual machinery for enforcing law and order.

A legitimate doubt may be entertained at this point as to whether the same tactics would work against other strong nations, especially against people reputedly ruthless and bellicose. Experience has shown, however, that exploitation has its own code of ethics, and that there is hardly any difference in the behaviour of dissimilar peoples when it comes to terrorism and retaliation. A more valid exception can be made in the case of the sadist who titillates himself by inflicting suffering on others. Whether or not a whole people can be sadistic by nature—and there are certain interested groups who would have us believe that certain nations are—it must be obvious to the reader of these pages, even with an A B C of psychology, that a Satyagrahi is incapable of providing sadistic gratification to the tyrant. Sacrificial suffering, deliberately invited, is the very opposite of snivelling submission to an oppressor's will. The Satyagrahi is not a helpless passive victim of the lordling's wrath beseeching him for forgiveness and mercy. Instead he is the aggressor himself, the one who forces the oppressor to be brutal to the last extreme. It is the Satyagrahi who takes the initiative and manoeuvres the opponent into doing what he, the self-appointed victim, actually wants him to do, namely, to be injurious. And the more vicious the opponent is, according to experiences of Indian nationalists, the quicker comes the victory for the Satyagrahis. The sadist, therefore, does not find a victim in a Satyagrahi. Instead, the former is forced into action by the latter and thus victimized.

As a form of mass action directed toward the attainment of desired social ends, Satyagraha is just another technique which mankind can use at will. According to the present writer's judgment, it has no claim to moral superiority over other methods of solving group disputes, for moral standards vary from people to people, place to

place, and time to time. There being no universal and time-honoured criterion for ethical values, it is useless to prescribe Satyagraha on the grounds of moral superiority, notwithstanding the efforts of Gandhi and his ardent disciples. On the contrary, Satyagraha's priority depends upon its higher efficiency; its claim to superiority over war and violence is based on certain of its contributions which happen to be desperately sought by the majority of civilized human beings at the present time.

For one thing, Satyagraha, unlike war or a violent revolution, does not necessitate wholesale murder, bloodshed and depredation of property and natural resources. Although it fulfils the function of war as a would-be solution for group disputes, it does not entail the horrible and undesirable consequences of two-sided violence. It is true that a Satyagraha sometimes engenders one-sided violence, and that the armed party to the struggle has let more than one pool of blood and destroyed more than one unprotected property. The British government in India, we have already seen, has employed violent means in the past to suppress the non-violent nationalist insurrection. It has ordered "*lathi-charges*" to disperse Congress processions and to thwart "salt raids," and it has, occasionally, resorted to scattered gun-fire in order to suppress the incipient "mutiny." It has confiscated the farms and bank accounts of the party workers, and many times it has destroyed the movable property belonging to them. Nevertheless, the Indian incidents clearly show that complete non-violence on one side reduces the violence and destruction inflicted by the opponent to the barest minimum. The sum total of deaths, injuries and property violations by the British during India's various civil disobedience movements and no-tax campaigns pales into insignificance when compared to the horrors of the so-called Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, and to insurrections and revolutions of other countries, the United States of America included.

Another characteristic of Satyagraha which makes it preferable to war lies in its treatment of the means-ends relationship. Justification of means by the ends, has been "put over" on the masses since the first interest was organized. Now mankind is beginning to peer out from behind its blinders. The "people" now know that violence undertaken in the name of howsoever golden an objective invariably results in their greater grinding. The dualism must be destroyed if justice is to be secured for one and all. The means should be the end in process and the ideal in the making. For a worthy cause, the method of attainment should be equally worthy if the value is to remain the same. Since violence aims at annihilation rather than at adjustment, it cannot produce a just settlement. But Satyagraha can, for its compelling force is aimed at converting instead of destroying the opponent.

This brings us to Satyagraha's most salient contribution to inter-group relationship as a means to social ends—a characteristic of Satyagraha which makes the latter vastly superior to war as a would-be arbiter of a given conflict. The solution of a conflict includes in its process the determination of the relative justice of contending claims and the eventual prevalence of truth in the matter. Violence, the necessary corollary of war, however, is incapable of working on this basis, for it denies the intangible nature of truth and the relative basis for justice. Indeed, violence aims at either annihilating or obliterating the opposition instead of adjusting the contending claims. In other words, violence operates to establish might as right. Consequently, physical and military might becomes an absolute value and the sole arbiter of truth. The ensuing peace treaty is signed at the point of the bayonet and is not weighed on the scales of justice. Might is proclaimed as right under the fallacy of an exclusive pursuit of a relative value—hence the failure of violence as a means of solving group disputes. On the contrary, Satyagraha grants the intangibility of truth in

deliberately adopted as a part of national policy, can be profitably utilized by countries other than East India. Other nations will have to do one thing more than was necessary in India. They will have to indoctrinate their respective peoples in non-violence. That, however, does not sound like so much of an obstacle if we bear in mind that even for war we require an untold amount of indoctrination.

Our study of the *Swaraj* movement has shown that the nation-wide pyramidal organization of the Congress party and its firm but intelligent discipline of rank-and-file Satyagrahis has gone a long way toward the various victories of non-violent direct action. Success has been proportional to the degree of solidarity, sacrifice, courage, endurance, initiative and resourcefulness displayed by leaders and followers. Whenever these factors were diluted or missing, Satyagraha had to be suspended or it died a natural death. Satyagraha is not *Aladdin's Lamp*. It cannot win victories by itself. Like war, it is only a technique, and as in war, it is the relative strength of the people that decides its success or failure. The limitations and shortcomings of war are the limitations and shortcomings of Satyagraha. Man-power, financial resources, industrial development, the quality of the individual soldier, and the like, play a substantial part in a Satyagraha campaign as they would in a war. The Bombay Provincial Congress Committee had to regiment Bombay's commerce and finance in 1930, in order to strengthen its hand. The Congress high command had to levy strict production conditions on the textile mills throughout the country in the same year so that its boycott of British goods might be air-tight.

Nevertheless, it appears from our study of the anti-untouchability campaign and the labour movement that racial and political minorities, as well as relatively weaker economic groups, are better off with Satyagraha than with violence. In the first place, they have greater legal freedom and less interference in that all-important period of

preliminary organization and indoctrination if they are pledged to non-violence. Furthermore, these groups would be playing against heavy odds should they resort to violence; for the entrenched interests are experts at their own game, physical force, and are in possession of unlimited supplies of arms and ammunition. In spite of these facilities, it is overzealous to contend that Satyagraha can solve all conflicts and function under all conditions, the claims of Gandhi and his hundred per cent disciples notwithstanding. There are hopeless cases and causes in whose behalf neither a Satyagraha nor a war has any chance of succeeding. And there are conditions under which neither method has any chance. In fact, it is unrealistic to assume that a social technique could ever be a cure-all, whether it be violent or non-violent. No social end is gained by simply waving the magic wand of either Satyagraha or war. It rests upon the men who have to fight, violently or non-violently.

The Indian experiments in Satyagraha have been carried out, as we have already seen, in three fields—revolution, civil war, and class struggle. In all three, non-violent direct action has proved itself practicable and effective: as a bloodless nationalist revolution, Satyagraha has advanced India far toward nationhood; as a non-violent civil war between the pro-British and the nationalist factions, Satyagraha has all but nullified the former; as a class struggle, Satyagraha has won shorter hours and higher wages for the mill hands of Ahmedabad, Bombay and Calcutta, and lower taxes and better ownership rights for the farmers of Bardoli, Kheda, Bihar and the United Provinces. Nevertheless, Satyagraha has not yet been applied to a struggle between two or more sovereign States. Although, as we have observed, the Indian movement has all the aspects of a fight between two nations, Satyagraha has not had to face an invading army. What would be the Satyagrahic manoeuvres, actions and counteractions, in the face of sudden invasion is an open question. Satyagraha has not, as yet, been put to such a test.

However, there is already some evidence upon which we can enlarge by calling upon our imagination. Suppose country A invades country B, and the outraged nation proposes to resist non-violently. In that eventuality, B would not take the invasion supinely as the Western doctrine of pacifism would specify if drawn to the corner. Instead—and here we are drawing upon our imagination—thousands of its citizens would throw their defenceless bodies on the earth at the frontier, giving the invading horde a choice of either advancing over a human bloody carpet or staying outside. This hypothetical situation is, to some extent, suggested by the manoeuvres employed by Satyagrahis in 1930, at the Dharasana salt depots near Surat and in the streets of Bombay. How far can the invaders go when faced with courageous, well-meaning and obliging Satyagrahis who leave them no alternative? The same tactics can be used at an aerodrome if the opponent seeks to evade an engagement by flying over the frontier. The resourcefulness of man is likely to invent many more stratagems to meet the "enemy" at every step in a strictly non-violent fashion, much in the same way as it has helped him to cover reams of paper with army and navy secrets and military science. The suggestions might sound ridiculous and fantastic, for we are all the creatures of our past, and our senses hesitate to take chances with new perceptions. But a considerable part of what is suggested has been successfully practised in India in the past, and perhaps the rest is not so impossible as it sounds. Here is the challenge!

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